University of Alberta

Nature-based Leisure Events that Incorporate Playing Music

By

©

Chad Howard Clifford

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Abstract

This phenomenological study explores the emotional experience of playing a musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event. Data was collected from ten participants through either interviews or written accounts. The instruments participants' played included guitar, singing, fife, fiddle, harmonica, and the wooden flute. The setting varied from urban parks to remote national parks on outings ranging in duration from an hour to over a week.

My findings revealed five topic areas common to the experience of playing an musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event: escape and change as a motivation for visits to natural areas; sensing the moment; music as a means to focus sensory attention; the combined effect of playing music in a natural setting: something more than the composite parts; music as a way of connecting to nature; and contentment and appreciation. This study offers an insightful and descriptive account of these little understood topics.

Playing music during a nature-based leisure event powerfully altered/enhanced the emotions of participants' in a positive direction. Therefore, it can be stated this activity created a positive nature experience among participants. Such experiences are valuable for the creation of emotional attachments to natural areas, which is believed to lead to pro-environmental behaviours.

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Introduction

Personal Background

The study of the natural world beckons me. I suppose that my upbringing is the reason that I find the natural world so intriguing. Throughout my childhood and adolescence, on most weekends, my family visiting natural areas and parks. When I was old enough (eight), my parents began to take me on longer and more remote wilderness trips, via canoes, kayaks, skis, and snowshoes. As an adult, my visits to the wilderness continued with more vigour. Moreover, by this point in my life, I had become a scout troop leader, young naturalist director, camp councillor, and wilderness tripping/camp-craft director and had taken numerous wilderness survival and living skills courses; attained degrees in Natural Science and Outdoor Recreation; and eventually started a traditional wilderness skills and nature awareness camp in Ontario.

Throughout these years, I began developing a personal attachment to the wilderness and, therefore, found myself becoming more sensitive to wilderness-use issues in Canada and abroad. Additionally, my everyday behaviours began to lean more and more towards being pro-environmental. I believe that my pro-environmental behaviours stemmed from an attachment I felt towards the wilderness, developed from the time I spent there. Moreover, because of the worsening state of our natural environment, I've come to believe that people need to become more pro-environmentally active.

For instance, exploitation of our natural resources has been a controversial issue in recent decades, and the problem is more pertinent today than ever. Since Rachel Carson's book Silent Spring was published in 1962, people have become more sensitive to the degrading effects that our actions have had upon the environment. Even prior to Carson's book and its warnings about the use of chemicals in the environment were the warnings of wilderness philosophers such as John Muir, Henry Thoreau, Grey Owl, Sigurd Olson, Aldo Leopold, and Bob Marshall. They all warned society of the senseless destruction of the natural world at the same time romanticized the benefits of the wilderness experience. More recently, advocates and organizations fighting to save the environment have included Elizabeth May, David Suzuki, Paul Watson, Dave Foreman, Greenpeace, the Sea Shepard Society, the Sierra Club, the Sierra Legal Defense Fund, Environment Voters, the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Society and an ever-growing host of other organizations and individuals.

The evidence that supports the notion of a diminishing environment is not without credibility. A recent collaborative effort on behalf of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Environment Programme, the World Bank, and the World Resources Institute (2000) published an analysis of the state of the world's ecosystems. The aforementioned analysis shows alarming, albeit not surprising, statistics. For instance, human activities were found to cause the following:

> 75 percent of the major marine fish stocks are either depleted from overfishing or are being fished at their biological limit…Logging and conversion have shrunk the world's forest cover by as much as half, and roads, farms, and residences are rapidly fragmenting what remains…58 percent of coral reefs are potentially threatened…65 percent of roughly 1.5 billion ha of cropland worldwide have experienced some

> degree of soil degradation…Overpumping of groundwater by the world's farmers exceeds natural recharge rates by at least 160 billion m^3 per year… and the pressures responsible for these declines continue to increase…(UNDP et al., 2000, pp. 16-17)

The warnings within the report continue with references to overpopulation, ozone depletion, mass species extinction, and the general degradation of the Earth's finite ecosystems. Similar analyses have been offered by a host of prominent scientists, Nobel Prize winners, and environmentalists.

Environmental Behaviours

It is puzzling why more citizens are not actively engaged in the amelioration of environmental problems, especially those in wealthy northern nations. They are responsible for most of the environmental crises the world now faces. Moreover, Canada and the United States, which are amongst the worst of the environmental polluters, are actually softening already inadequate environmental policies.

Liz White, the founding director of the newly formed Environment Voters, offers one answer to why citizens do not seek change. White (2000) believes that the people's power is thwarted because they do not understand how to make politicians heed their concerns; hence, multinational corporations and wealthy lobby groups are able to continue to exploit ecosystems. To combat the problem, White and her colleagues began a non-partisan political group in Canada which works for or against the election of politicians based on their environment records. Past provincial and federal government environmental commissionaires, ministers and scientific advisors endorse the ideals of Environment Voters.

Besides L. White's (2000) conviction that politicians in Canada are not heeding the concern of the voters to govern pro-environmentally is the fact that the people themselves do little in their daily routines to be pro-active. For instance, at a time when more and more cities are having "bad air warning" days, many people choose to drive large automobiles to work, avoiding the use of public transportation and non-consumptive means like walking or bicycling. Beyond transportation issues are the use of dangerous lawn care products, excessive consumption, recycling instead of reusing, and a host of other behaviours that are well within the capability of ordinary citizens to change.

Among people who practice proactive environmental behaviours, Grob (1995) found that, within his model of environmental behaviour, the most effective components stemmed from people's philosophical values (i.e., post-materialism and open-mindedness) and emotions (i.e., emotional response to environmental issues). Interestingly, environmental awareness (i.e., knowledge and recognition of the issues) was not vital for pro-environmental behaviours.

Grob's (1995) findings are echoed by others. For example, Ken Deacon, active environmentalist and biologist, believes: "People do not need to know more, they need to care more… people have been exposed to the issues" (personal communication, March, 1997). Similarly, Stephen J. Gould (1991) also believes that people will not destroy what they love arguing that emotional bonds to species and the natural environment are needed for their survival. Finally, Tom Brown Jr., outdoor skills instructor and author of numerous wilderness philosophy and wilderness field guides, also believes that people need to experience the wilderness to develop attachments and behaviours that act to create “environmental warriors” (personal communication, 1992).

If people with emotional attachments to the natural environment tend to possess pro-environmental behaviours, knowing how their emotional attachment is formed and maintained is of fundamental importance. As well, creating opportunities for more people to develop such attachments would help to curb the rapid degradation of natural ecosystems. The obvious place to develop and study emotional connections to the natural environment is in the natural environment. Studies in the area of nature-based leisure, for example, look at a mixture of activities and contexts in which a diverse assortment of participants engage with natural settings. Activities as diverse as hiking the busy trails in Banff National Park with friends or taking a solo canoe trip on a remote lake in Ontario fall under the category of nature-based leisure.

Nature-based Leisure and Music

Nature-based leisure activities are beneficial in numerous ways (Kaplan & Kaplan, 1989; Easley, Passineau & Driver, 1990). Researchers often measure the experiences of people in post hoc analyses by measuring aspects such as relaxation/arousal, cognition, concentration, self-awareness, sense of competence, and freedom. One thing they have learned is that there are certain trigger events that tend to foster beneficial nature-based leisure experiences (Brown, 1989). Some triggers found to be effective include extended amounts of time in the wilderness and the perceived social and physical solitude (Greenway, 1990; Hummel & Donovan, 1990; Kaplan & Talbot, 1986). For example, a solo canoe trip of seven days away from urban landmarks is more effective than an afternoon canoe trip with friends near a popular beach. But this is by no means universal -- people respond differently to each situation. Thus, to allow more to attain the benefits of a nature-based leisure experience, an exploration of different experiences (or triggers) is likely to be beneficial.

One trigger yet to be explored in nature-based leisure research is music. The effect of music in other areas of research has been established. For instance, studies have found that music intensifies and even dictates the felt emotion of participants viewing paintings (Stratton & Zalanoski, 1989; Limbert & Polzella, 1998). Such studies hint that music may also intensify and even dictate the emotions felt in natural settings.

From a personal perspective, my first significant experience with music in the wilderness occurred during sweatlodge ceremonies. "Let's go watch the elders assemble the little-boys (i.e., drums that are used in lodge ceromonies)" my friend exclaims. The sound of a drum in a sweatlodge is impressive, but I did not feel the power of music in a sweatlodge until a few years later. During a traditional ceremony on Manitoulin Island, I had the opportunity to participate in a sweatlodge where everyone was given a rattle. I thought that it would be impossible to have a meditative experience with all the rattles being played in our tightly filled lodge. The rattle I had was fashioned from a heavy set of horns joined by a piece of bone on a sturdy piece of wood. When the Old-One began the ceremony, various songs were sung, interspersed with periods of loud rattling. The lodge was dark, and tobacco and herbs were placed onto hot rocks, filling the steamy and dusty air with a sweet odour. The sound of the rattles had the opposite effect of what I had presupposed it would. I noticed that I was able to contemplate whatever came to my mind with great clarity. When the rattles stopped, the clarity ceased, and my mind focused on the people present in the lodge and the ceremonial procedures.

In retrospect, I have since often experienced a heightened awareness of my surroundings in the wilderness as a result of music. At one of the wilderness philosophy camps I attended during the early 1990s, I was introduced to the native flute music of Carlos Nakai. Nakai's music was said to be good background music for nature meditations. It was, and I now own and play three wooden flutes, which I usually take with me on nature walks. Perhaps analogous to when Henry David Thoreau played his flute during his time on Walden Pond, I find the ambience of a wooden flute in a natural setting to create a powerful experience. Later, on camping trips, friends also found the music of the flute to be a powerful influence on their experience. At wilderness skills camps, I started to introduce flute music into parts of our programs such as nature sits. Yet again, the feedback was positive.

Another experience related to music in the wilderness involved a 13-day canoe trip with a group of university students I once led. The students each had to lead a lesson while on the trip. One student was having second thoughts about the lesson topic he had chosen to teach. After 10 days of procrastination, he came to me with a spur of the moment idea—to have a drumming circle. I briefly contemplated the notion that the drumming could create noise pollution for anyone nearby. However, given that there was no one close to us and that the drums were only small plastic olive barrels (used to carry food), we decided to proceed. The drumming circle had the effect of bringing the group together at the end of a long and wet week. I could tell from the facial expressions and verbal exchanges that the group was having a positive experience.

Conclusion

Creating emotional attachment to natural areas is of paramount importance for the protection of fast-degrading ecosystems. Music may act as a trigger for developing such emotional attachment. In light of this, the purpose of this study is to explore the lived experience of people who have utilized music during a nature-based leisure event. In so doing, I hope to learn more about how people connect to the natural environment in powerful and meaningful ways.

Thus, my research question is:

What is the emotional experience of a nature-based leisure event that incorporates (live) music?

The word "what" acts to specify aspects of the emotional experience. "Emotional experience" relates to an interpretation by those who have been a part of the phenomenon. The phrase "nature-based leisure event" specifies the context in a natural setting, including the time before, during, and after the musical interlude. The phrase "(live) music" eliminates all other types of musical sources.[1] In order to provide a context for the preceding research question, the next section will describe previous research studies that have examined emotion, emotions experienced when listening to music, and the emotional experience of being in a natural environment.

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[1] One reason that other sources (e.g., CD players) of music are not included is that such mechanical items violate the tenet that the nature experience involves an escape from mechanical objects and the noises of everyday urban lifestyles. Live music is of the moment, often utilizing less technology than pre-recorded music, which requires stereo systems to amplify the sound. Pre-recorded music or radios may create a mental tie to the urban environment.

Literature Review

In my search of literature pertaining to music during a nature-based leisure event, I was unable to find any study that involved nature and music. The closest I came to finding information on this topic were studies concerned with the interaction of music and viewing paintings. Surprisingly, I also found little literature pertaining to emotions and the natural environment in nature-based leisure research.

This review of relevant literature is divided into three sections. The first section explores the hard-to-define concept of emotions. The study of emotions entails numerous fields and disciplines, of which I have pursued the cognitive experience of emotion because of its relevance to the lived experiences of people. With the initial groundwork on emotion laid, in the second section I consider music and emotions. Music has potentially powerful effects on people emotionally. Thus, how people experience music is explored by considering some of the more prominent theories of how people listen to music. In the final section, I discuss the natural environment and emotion. A common theme through this literature review is the structure of an experienced emotion, which includes cognitive aspects, levels of arousal and pleasantness, along with the adjectives that people use to describe their feelings, moods, and emotions.

Emotion

People are normally confident in their emotional response to ordinary situations (Lewis, 2000). For example, people know that it is not appropriate to laugh upon witnessing someone being injured. People also understand that emotions and moods somehow affect their thought processes and decisions (Isen, 2000). However, researchers interested in emotions find that there are numerous issues to consider, including that there is nothing tangible about an emotion, no one area in our brain is specifically associated with emotions, and no universal definition of emotion. Therefore, the first step in understanding emotion is to determine what we mean by it.

The Oxford Concise English Dictionary (Pearsall, 1999) describes an emotion as a strong feeling distinct from reasoning (p. 466); describes a feeling as an emotional state (p. 520); and describes being emotional as showing an intense feeling or as arousing (p. 466). Similar to the dictionary's tautology, diverse fields of research do not offer a concise definition of emotion either. De Rivera (1977) uses the parable of the pink elephant when defining an emotion: it is like many blindfolded people, independently trying to describe what a pink elephant looks like. In other words, people try to define emotion from diverse paradigms, but are describing something that does not exist in nature. There are dozens of theoretical perspectives and approximately one hundred theories on emotion (De Rivera). Moreover, these perspective theories vary by a disciplinary background. For example, psychologists are interested in emotion as a motivation of behaviour; anthropologists consider cultural and social circumstances that shape an emotional response; sociologists may look for social and societal influences on people's emotions (Ekman & Scherer, 1984); and musicologists and people in the arts may be interested in aesthetic views that consider how emotions are experienced.[2] Frustratingly, there seems to have been little crossover between these diverse traditions and this tends to fragment our understanding of emotion (Plutchik, 1984; Shcerer, 1994; Strongman, 1996). Consequently, many theories and models describing diverse aspects of emotion have been developed.

Although the concept of emotion is indeed complex (Averill, 1999), it may abstractly be defined as a response to an event (Frijda, 2000), being either primary (i.e., biological) or secondary (i.e., cultural or cognitive) in nature (G.M. White, 2000). Hence, to fully understand the various views of emotion would require the consideration of diverse fields of study, each being large in scope. However, it would not be possible to discuss the many viewpoints and perspectives of emotion here. Thus, in this section I will first briefly mention some of the biological research traditions, and second, focus in greater detail on the cognitive aspect and the experience of emotion and how people manage emotions.

Biological Emotions

Innate, instinctual, or 'basic emotions' include sadness, anger, fear, and happiness (Averill, 1999; Johnson-Laird & Oatley, 2000; Plutchik, 1984). Basic emotions do not require cognitive focusing and happen automatically, often beyond a person's conscious control. Conversely, higher emotions like being bored or delighted are theoretically complex (i.e., overlapping and difficult to measure) and include the cognitive aspect of the experience.

---

[2] Strongman (1996) offers a good overview of the diverse theories of emotion.

Since studies of biological emotions focus more on basic emotions, it is not considered a holistic approach to the study of emotions. However, considerations of the biological aspects of emotion include numerous areas of research, and it is commonly accepted that different bodily processes are involved. Plutchik, (1984) outlined four major areas as follows: neurological, evolutionary, physiological, and the dynamic tradition, wherein Freud is credited with study of psychoanalysis and dealing with repressed emotions rooted in one's subconscious.

The brain has been considered by some to be a key element in understanding emotional responses and motivation. Neurological studies on emotion began with Walter Cannon, who believed the hypothalamus was responsible for our emotions (Plutchik, 1984). Since Cannon's work, other brain researchers have continued to explore regions of the brain believed to be related to our emotions (G.M. White, 2000). As a result, we now know that there is no one area or circuit in the brain that holds our emotions; rather, different and interacting networks exist. For example, current research demonstrates that one part of the brain can only be understood in comparison to different parts and, moreover, that little is actually understood about the brain to begin with (Averill, 1996).

Physiological research on emotions includes an interaction between emotion and physiological processes (Frijda, 2000; Kemper, 2000; Lewis, 2000; Plutchik, 1984). For example, a loud or sudden noise may result in the expressed emotion of fear; however, a person may become accustomed to the loud noise, or even learn not to fear it (Lewis, 2000). In this example, the natural response to the loud noise is overcome with experience, a cognitive aspect. However, the cognitive aspect would seem somewhat buried in consciousness. For example, traffic noise may go unnoticed by people living in a traffic-busy area. For the most part, neurological and physiological studies of emotion are strongly rooted in the biological or primary tradition of emotion research, with little reference made to the experience.

Cognitive Emotions: The Experience of Emotion

The experience of emotion is the least understood and studied aspect of emotion (Lewis, 2000); however, the lived experience is how the average person understands the concept of emotion, and therefore, may be the most meaningful portrayal of what emotion is. The study of the lived experience of emotion lies within the descriptions given by the participant. The meanings are filtered through the individual's understanding and capacity to express what was experienced, not the underlying biological processes. For instance, in a study considering how people perceive the emotions of others, Panksepp (2000) found that, (among people unexposed to the literature in psychology) someone's description of their own feelings is the best indicator of that person's emotions when compared to other clues such as facial expressions and vocal tone, cognitive, biological, and physiological expressions. Hence, dissecting the concept of emotion into little understood brain functions or physiological processes, which people (outside of psychology) may not consider to be a part of an emotion is of little value for this study.

To understand how an emotion is experienced, I will begin by examining the meanings of words used to describe emotions and the confusion that exists between the terms. Subsequently, a discussion of how an emotion is experienced in relation to cognitive processes including the object of an emotion (i.e., the cognitive focus partially responsible for causing an emotion and believed to strongly influence emotions). Lastly, I will consider a commonly accepted, bipolar structure of the experience of emotion.

Affect, mood, emotion, and feeling.

To understand emotion requires that we know how laypeople describe it in everyday language (Russell, 1997). Both laypeople and researchers alike use the everyday language of emotion to relay descriptions of the emotional state within themselves or the state believed to be in someone else. Therefore, it is significant that a researcher have a firm grasp on the different terms used by people when describing an emotion so that he or she is familiar with the meanings of the words used. Furthermore, a researcher should be aware of the confusion that is often prevalent between similar terms, both in everyday language and in research as well.

In psychological research and in everyday language, emotion, mood, affect, and feeling are often used interchangeably (Niedenthal, Setterlund & Jones, 1994; Russell, 1997; Russell & Snodgrass, 1987). However, in everyday language the differences and similarities between these terms are sometimes apparent. For example, people may possess the 'feeling' or 'emotion' of fear when lost on a cold day in the woods, but the acknowledgement of being lost would not be described as producing a fearful 'mood'. Also, a person may be in a bad 'mood' over the period of a week, but it would seem to make little sense to say that the person has been in a bad 'emotion' or a bad 'feeling' over the week. The fact that there are differences between these terms is obvious; however, how we define the difference is less clear.

A number of researchers have attempted to distinguish the meanings between the aforementioned terms in order to develop an enhanced vocabulary and understanding of each. Affect, mood, emotion, and feeling have been distinguished from one another a hierarchy based on time (i.e., duration), the level of analysis, and the focus of attention.

It is commonly accepted that emotions, moods and feelings influence behaviour and that affect is a summarizing term that includes emotions, moods (Isen, 2000) and feelings (Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner, & Reynolds, 1996). Hence, an affective response to a stimulus may include emotions, moods or feelings.

Mood and emotion are closely linked together, but are commonly differentiated by the duration of time and intensity. More specifically, emotion extended over time may be considered a mood with emotions often being greater in intensity (Ekman & Friesen, 1982; Isen, 1984; Niedenthal, Setterlund & Jones, 1994; Niedenthal & Showers, 1991; Parkinson, 1995; Whybrow, 1984). With respect to time, Ekman and Friesen (1982) found that the average expression of emotion lasts between 0.5 and 4.0 seconds. Hence, if an emotion lasted longer than four seconds, it could be considered a mood. A concern about Ekman and Friesen's proposition is that their study measured the expression of emotion in terms of facial expressions' sustained response times to a stimulus (i.e., how long someone's facial expression lasts in response to a given stimulus). Facial expression has been one way to measure the expression of emotion but it is not considered adequate alone for defining emotion. Furthermore, the study of expressions is considered a biological reaction to a stimulus. Facial expressions may be considered an indicator, but not a good descriptor of an experience. Hence, the experience may last a lot longer than the expression of the emotion.

Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner and Reynolds (1996, p. 8) proposes distinctions between mood and emotion (see table 1). Emotion is described in the table as a relatively short-term episode that has a rapid and distinct beginning and end. For example, an emotion of awe may be a result of listening to a talented musician play a piece of music whereas a mood may be the anxiety that a performer was feeling during the morning and afternoon prior to the playing. The intensity of the mood during the afternoon is more like a constant background sensation compared to the suddenness of the emotion experienced during the piece of music. The emotion experienced in response to music may dissipate rather quickly, perhaps ten to fifteen minutes after the music has stopped, but may alter the person's mood to one of happiness, which would last longer. Larson (2000) describes the differences between emotion and mood nicely by stating that "moods nag at us, emotions scream at us" (p. 130). However, it is difficult to know when the emotion ends and when the mood takes over in this situation since there is no set level of intensity or other exact feature to distinguish the two phenomena.

Table 1

Distinctions Between Mood and Emotion

	Mood	**Emotion**
Duration	Relatively long-term	Relatively short-term
Time Pattern	Gradual onset, continuous, tonic	Rapid onset, episodic, phasic
Intensity	Relatively weak	Relatively strong
Causation	Not caused by specific events	Caused by a specific event
Function	Provides information about current	Provides information about
current		
	state of self	state of situation
Directedness	Unfocussed	Takes specific object

Note. From Changing Moods (p. 8), by B. Parkinson, P. Totterdell, R.B. Briner, & S. Reynolds, 1996, New York: Addison, Wesley & Longman.

One key point that Parkinson et al. (1996) define is 'directedness'. A mood may stem from a directedness or attention to a number of events, but an emotion will stem from a few or even a single event. Therefore, a mood indicates a longer lasting feeling compared to an emotion that comes and goes rather quickly with specific events. For example, being rained on during a weekend canoe trip, for some people, may be less than ideal and, when combined with the work of long portages and mosquitoes, may result in people falling into an agitated mood. While in this agitated mood, an emotion of wonder may arise suddenly from experiencing the grand vista of a waterfall at the end of a portage. Hence, accumulative negative or positive events may influence mood, while the directedness of attention on fewer (often one) events influences emotion.

Furthermore, mood may be viewed an indicator of a person's perceived (and often real) capability of handling the environmental circumstances. For example, a person who has been feeling good has probably experienced positive events in the recent past as opposed to someone who is feeling discouraged because of a build up of overly challenging events or circumstances. Hence, a mood is also an indication of a person's ability to cope with environmental factors. On the other hand, an emotion is an indicator of a person's ability to deal with the immediate situation, often taking priority over a mood.

Feelings are the verbal descriptors of affect (Solomon, 2000). Hence, feelings are the adjectives used in everyday language for describing the state or experienced affect, emotion, or mood. For example, feelings such as being tired, sad, lonely, depressed, happy, or elated are descriptors of affect described in everyday language. Feelings (the adjectives of affect) will be considered more after the cognitive aspects of emotion have been first discussed.

Object of emotion: The cognitive aspect of experiencing an emotion.

As noted earlier, to experience an emotion, the emotion must have an object (Averill, 1996; Edwards & Dickerson, 1987; Kenny, 1963; Mathews & Wells, 1999;

Mogg & Bradley, 1999; Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner, & Reynolds, 1996; Tallis, 1999; Tan, 2000). When considering the object of an emotion, a cognitive component is involved. Without the cognitive aspect, there is no experience of emotion. Furthermore, selective attention (on objects) is one of the most central and influential aspects of psychological processes (Derryberry & Tucker, 1994).

The process of experiencing an emotion is as follows. A person (a) encounters an event or object and decides if it is threatening, pleasant or other, (b) feels a resulting emotion, such as being happy or fearful, and (c) is aware of the emotion being felt (Plutchik, 1984; Russell & Snodgrass, 1987). For example, if people on a winter-walk in the woods come across a creek-bed to cross, they would (or should) cognitively decide if it is safe to cross, have an accompanying emotion like fear or caution, and lastly, be aware of the felt emotion (of fear). It is clear from this example that emotions may have a functional aspect for safety as well as the remembered emotional experience available for future circumstances.

In contrast, Lewis (2000) states that biological emotion-elicitors, like a blast of cold wind, may cause shivering, but feeling cold is not commonly seen as an emotion or mood. Lewis' example describes an evolutionary (biological) response of emotion. Biological emotions are objectless emotions, common to unconscious or instinctual reactions. The experience of emotion does not occur with objectless emotions because the cognitive aspect is absent, at least initially. Hence, a blast of cold wind may make us cold and cause us to shiver, but this is a physiological response that occurs whether or not we are aware of the cold initially. Furthermore, the cold wind dictates how long the objectless emotion of being cold will last, not our process of cognitively making the cold an object of emotion.

Another example of an object of emotion is music to the interest of its listener. When someone listens to a preferred piece of music, the music may be the object of emotion and the resulting emotion may be one of interest. For the experience of emotion to occur from music, the music (object) must be cognitively processed. The question that begs to be answered now is why would background music affect us if we were not focusing our attention on it (the object of our emotion)? If we intermittently give our attention to the background music, the music may become part of the ambience of the environment (to be discussed hereafter). In this case, background music may affect us in terms of our mood with our object of emotion focussed mostly elsewhere. Having emotion, mood, feeling and affect defined is of value when considering the structure of an emotion, which will be discussed next.

Bipolar, circumplex structure of affect.

To experience emotion requires a cognitive aspect, where we first consider the circumstance (and object) and then experience an emotion as an internal state (Russell, 1978). Although the cognitive element is intertwined with felt emotions, the structure of the resulting emotion has been considered independently as well. Studies using various measures (e.g., self-report scales) have been utilized to develop a bipolar circumplex model of affect, which has generally been accepted among researchers (Parkinson, Totterdell, Briner & Reynolds, 1996; Plutchik, 1984; Russell, 1980, 1997; Russell & Bullock, 1985).

When considering a structural representation of emotion, the term emotion is usually avoided because of the confusion that may arise with the similar concept of mood. Hence, affect is used to describe the structure of an emotion, which therefore is also considered to represent mood in such models (Parkinson et al., 1996). A problem in labeling a bipolar model with the term affect is that such models have been validated in studies that often measure emotion, not mood. In other words, using an encompassing term like affect (that includes emotion, mood, and feeling) in a model that has been based on the more specific study of emotion is unsuitable. In light of this, Ekman (1994) argues that bipolar models are not strongly connected to moods; hence, affect (and mood) may not be represented in such models. However, this argument does not limit the relevance of bipolar models as far as emotions are concerned. As mentioned earlier, emotion and mood are closely related and arbitrarily defined from one another across varying measures of time, directedness, and intensity. However, Ekman's point does highlight the need for careful consideration of methods and terms used in bipolar affect research, and in studies of emotion.

Russell (1980) and Parkinson et al. (1996) credit Schlosberg (1952) with devising the first circumplex structure of affect. Schlosberg had people view pictures of facial expressions in order to identify an expressed emotion. Schlosberg found that using a two dimensional model adequately defined the structure of emotion, utilizing the adjectives given by his participants. The dimensions used in Schlosberg's model were a rejection-attention continuum (vertical axis) and a pleasant-unpleasant continuum (horizontal axis). Dimension has since been the term used for the continuum of opposing poles of bipolar models (Russell & Lemay, 2000). Hence, the pleasant-unpleasant continuum mentioned above would be considered one dimension and rejection-attention continuum another dimension.

Schlosberg (1952) demonstrated that some feelings were at opposite poles to one another, and yet others were not so negatively correlated. For example, happiness was found to be pleasant (and neutral on the rejection-attention axis) and anger, unpleasant (and neutral rejection-attention axis). Therefore happiness and anger were negatively correlated with one another and located at opposing poles of the pleasant-unpleasant dimension. Other terms, more positively (or negatively) related in meaning, grouped together at varying points in the model, in a circular fashion. Later on, Schlosberg (1954) added another dimension to his bipolar circumplex of affect. The third dimension to his model was entitled the degree of activation. However, because the third dimension was so similar to the dimension of rejection-attention, the original two dimensions (i.e., rejection-attention and pleasant-unpleasant) were the ones adopted by the majority of researchers.

Since Schlosberg (1952), Russell has been the most influential researcher in developing and utilizing the bipolar, circumplex structure of affect (Russell, 1978, 1979, 1980, 1983, 1997; Russel & Bullock, 1985; Russell & Snodgrass, 1987; Russell, Lewicka & Niit, 1989; Russell, Weiss & Mendelsohn, 1989).[3] Russell (1978) found that in data obtained from different methods of measuring the experience of affect, the dimensions of pleasure-displeasure and the degree of arousal were supported. In other words, the adjectives used to describe the experiences of affect fit into the bipolar structure. Russell (1980; Russell & Bullock, 1985), having found further support for bipolar dimensions, studied the circular structure that the adjectives used to describe affect formed in the circumplex. Similar to Schlosberg's findings on the formed circular aspect of the bipolar

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[3] See Plutchik and Conte (1997) for an outline of the various uses for other circumplex models in the study of emotions, personality, and clinical applications.

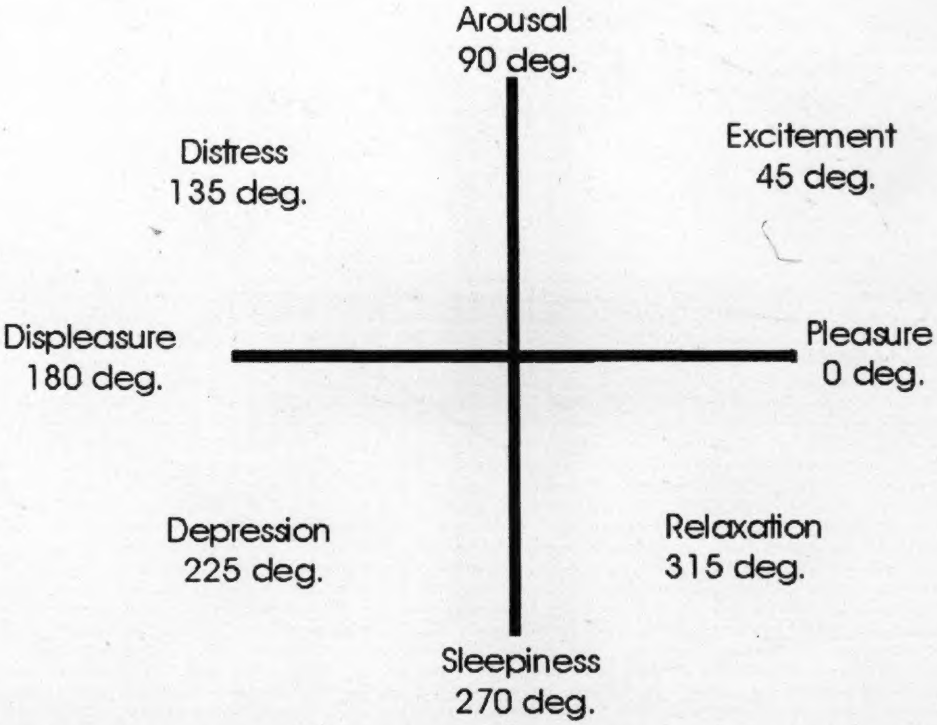
Arousal
90 deg.
Excitement
45 deg.
Distress
135 deg.
Displeasure
180 deg.
Pleasure
0 deg.
Depression
225 deg.
Relaxation
315 deg.
Sleepiness
270 deg.

Figure 1. Bipolar model of eight affects. Affects are mapped relative to zero degrees.

Note. From "A cicumplex model of affect," by J.A. Russell, 1980, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology, 39 (6), p. 1164.

structure of affect, Russell mapped eight affects, structured in four dimensions as shown in Figure 1.

What has made Russell's model lasting is probably its flexibility and the relative lack of alternatives. However, similar mono-polar models were at one time more broadly accepted (see Izard, 1972; McNair & Lorr, 1964; Watson and Tellegen, 1985). But, unlike Watson and Tellegen's (1985) mono-polar model, affective terms in the bipolar model at ninety degrees apart from one another may be related. Furthermore, affects that are not negatively correlated or in opposition to any other known affect still have a place in the bipolar model.

Russell has further developed his model by finding a total of 28 affects. Figure 2 demonstrates the circular shape of affects attained in Russell's (1980) research. Based on the tenets of the bipolar dimensions of pleasant-unpleasantness and level of arousal, the imperfect circle locates the everyday words as offered by participants within a modeled structure of emotion. From the bipolar model given in Figure 1, Russell was able to locate similar adjectives in proximity to one another as shown in Figure 2. In this bipolar model, the adjectives rarely have an exact opposite, as in mono-polar models.

The relevance of developing such a structure of affect is that it offers the layperson and the researcher alike a model that describes the affective experience. Furthermore, in knowing the level of arousal and pleasantness associated with a given emotion, a researcher may be able to better predict the emotional possibilities of a given activity or event.

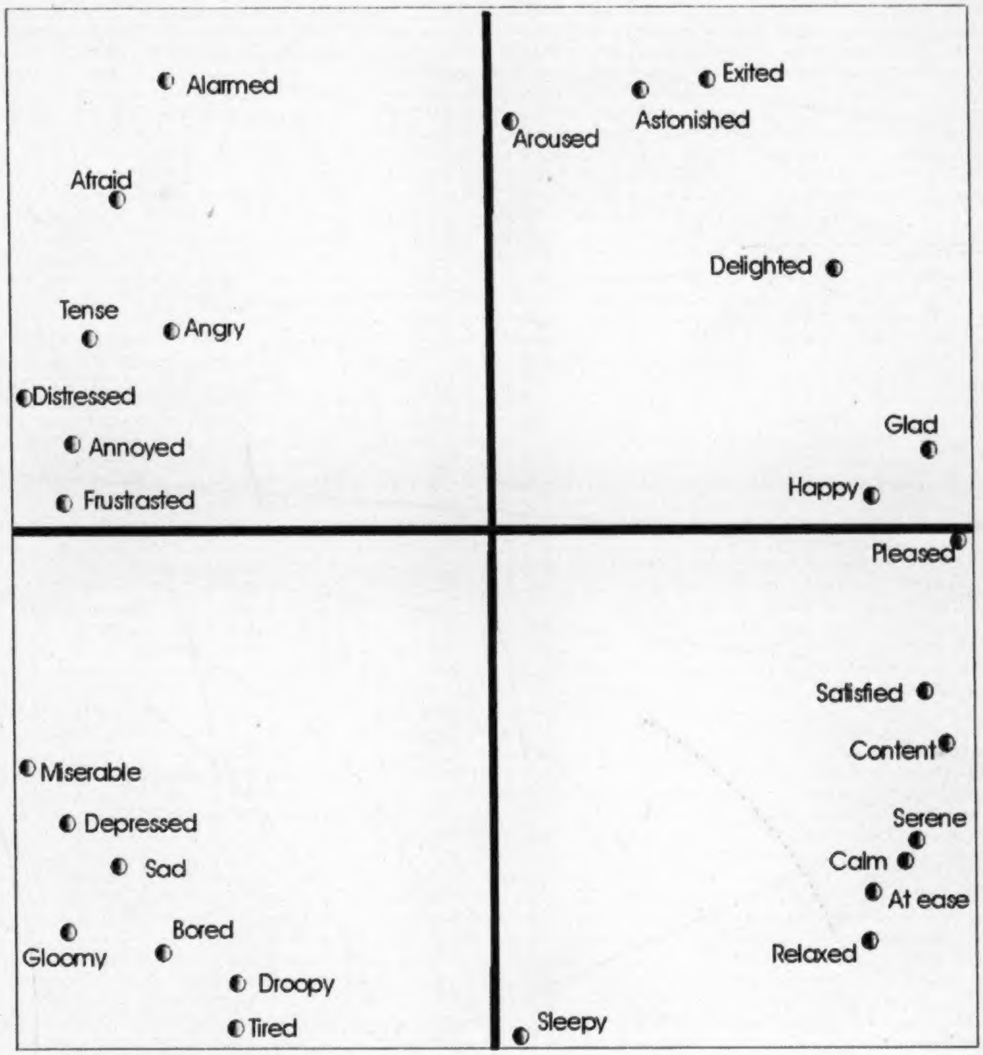

Figure 2. A circumplex of affect.

Note. From "Emotion and the environment" (p. 248) by J.A. Russell and J. Snodgrass, 1987, in D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), Handbook of environmental psychology, Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.

In conclusion, the study of emotions is complex and involves diverse research traditions such as the study of biological emotions and the experience of emotion, which has a cognitive aspect. The language used to describe the experience of emotions is an important aspect in understanding the experience of others. Emotion differs from mood in that an emotion is relatively short lived and intense whereas a mood is less intense and always present. The two dimensions that can explain the structure of an experienced emotion are the level of arousal, and the level of pleasantness. A model showing the bipolar, circumplex structure of affect demonstrates where feelings (adjectives of emotion) on average are located with respect to one another as measured by levels of arousal and pleasantness. Next, I will consider the topic of changing an emotion or mood.

Managing mood.

As stated earlier, there is no one theory of emotion or mood. Not surprisingly, then, studies on managing mood are sparse often lacking consensus on even the most basic principles (Parkinson et al., 1996; Thayer, 1996; Tice & Wallace, 2000).[4]

More recently, however, some progress in the study of mood management has occurred. For example, Parkinson and Totterdell (1999) have considered mood management strategies and the journal, Psychological Inquiry (volume 11, number 3), recently included a series of articles exploring the topic of mood regulation. Arguably, however, the most comprehensive study of mood management has been conducted by Thayer (1996).

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[4] Literature pertaining to managing affect often utilizes the term ‘mood’ because it specifically refers to a lasting state. Conversely, managing an emotion would be a brief, more temporal phenomenon, albeit an analogous endeavor.

Managing moods essentially requires being aware of a present mood and pursuing behavioural or cognitive strategies to change or sustain it (Parkinson & Totterdell, 1999; Thayer, 1996). Tice and Bradtslasky (2000) believe that mood control is like a form of self-control (e.g., like time management or dieting), which already has established theories (see also Carver & Scheier, 1981). Hence, Tice and Bradtslasky propose that mood control (like self-control) could entail three components: standards (or appropriateness of a desired mood), monitoring of mood, and strength to direct behaviour (Tice & Bradtslasky). Erber and Erber (2000a) echo the potential value of considering the regulation of emotion (and mood) in terms of other pre-established models of self-control.

Where people learn of attaining a desired mood varies between the influences of societal expectancies (Erber & Erber, 2000b), personal experience, and instinctual behaviour. Generally, people choose hedonistic behaviours over behaviours that result in feeling bad (Erber & Erber, 2000b; Larson, 2000; Tice & Wallace, 2000). Moreover, Tice and Bradtslasky's (2000) review of the literature indicates that some people tend to give priority to behaviours that affect their mood for the short-term, even if their behaviour is self-destructive in the long-term. For example, people may overeat for short term satisfaction, though they are aware of the long-term consequences. Of course, hedonistic mood management could also include behaviours with positive, long-term effects.

Thayer (1996) has outlined the basics of mood management principles he discovered over years of investigation. Thayer's findings demonstrate that mood regulation is basically a function of increasing/decreasing levels of energy while reducing levels of tension. For example, Thayer states that a bad mood is representative of a low energy level and a high tension level such that a reduction in the level of tension, combined with an altered level of energy, would result in a better mood.

Potentially, Thayer's (1996) two functions of mood change (i.e., level of energy and reduced tension) and Russell's (1987) two dimensions of affect (i.e., level of arousal and level of pleasantness) overlap one another. For example, Thayer's 'level of energy' is similar in meaning to Russell's dimension (or level) of arousal. As well, Russell's structure of affect (Figure 2) uses Thayer's term 'tense' as one of the descriptors at the unpleasant end of the pleasantness dimension. This suggests, therefore, that a level of tenseness may be comparable to the dimension of pleasantness. Thayer's (1996) theory of mood management is supported by his findings represented in Tables 2, 3, and 4. These Tables specifically show behaviours that people use to: (a) change a bad mood (see Table 2), (b) raise their energy level (see Table 3), and (c) reduce their anxiety (see Table 4).

Table 2 demonstrates that the most common behaviours used to change a bad mood are social interactions (54%) and thought control (51%). Interestingly, the ranking of 'listening to music' (third position at 47%) and a 'change of location' (e.g., go outside, 44%) support the notion that the outdoors and listening to music are commonly used to change a mood. In support of the theory of mood change, Thayer's (1996) analysis of

Table 2

Behaviours Used to Change a Bad Mood

1. Call, talk to or be with someone (54%)
2. Control thoughts (e.g., think positively, concentrate on something else) (51%)
3. Listen to Music (47%)
4. Avoid the thing (or person) causing the bad mood (47%)
5. Try to be alone (47%)
6. Evaluate or analyze the situation to determine mood cause (47%)
7. Try to put feelings in perspective (44%)
8. Change location (e.g., go for a drive, go outside) (44%)
9. Rest, take a nap, close eyes, or sleep (42%)
10. Exercise (this may include taking a walk) (37%)

Note. Behaviours ranked according to percentage endorsing item. Table includes the top ten (of 29) ranked behaviours. From The Origin of Everyday Moods (p.117), by R.E. Thayer, 1996, New York: Oxford University Press.

these results found that 33% of behaviours were directly related to a change in energy and tension levels, 20% of behaviours were distractions to peoples attention (e.g., TV), and the remaining behaviours were related to cognitive (e.g., think positively) or social (e.g., talk to someone) processes. Thayer later questioned a panel of psychotherapists about his findings, which helped to verify his results and theory of mood change.

Table 3 (behaviours used to raise energy levels) also shows the relevance of music and the outdoors in relation to mood change. To ‘go outside and get some fresh air’ (45%) is found to increase one’s alertness or energy level. As well, ‘listening to music’ (41%) is found to increase one’s alertness or energy level. As stated earlier, according to Thayer (1996), changing a mood is basically comprised of changing one’s energy level and reducing one’s tension level. Table 3 demonstrates that the outdoors and music both raise energy levels. It would be interesting to study what people do to foster a decrease in energy level, which may also change a bad mood. With the many activities that people pursue in the outdoors, and the many types of music that people listen to, it is foreseeable that energy levels may also drop by participating in the aforementioned. For example, going to the outdoors to study plants or to observe a sunrise may actually decrease ones energy to a lower level initially. Listening to music that has a slow tempo and feels meditative may also lower one’s initial energy level. Alternatively, listening to upbeat music that makes one feel like dancing may increase one’s initial level of energy.

Behaviours in Table 4 (lowering tension, nervousness, or anxiety) are closely related to behaviours in Table 2 (i.e., changing a bad mood), which suggests that a bad mood is more closely related to anxiety than to the level of energy in a person. For example, the top three behaviours in Tables 2 and 4 are the same, albeit with slightly varying percentages.

It is confusing that a mood management theory would be based on a decrease in tension. For instance, a person may embrace tension in situations that are not perceived as bad or negative mood (e.g., running a set of rapids in a canoe). Hence, it would seem to make sense that mood management may not always include behaviours that seek to reduce tension levels.

Table 3

Behaviours Used to Raise Alertness or Energy

1. Rest, take a nap, close eyes or sleep (68%)
2. Take a shower or bath or splash water on face (55%)
3. Go outside and get some fresh air (45%)
4. Do something to keep busy (43%)
5. Drink coffee or other caffeinated beverage (41%)
6. Listen to music (41%)
7. Eat something (37%)
8. Exercise (this may include taking a walk)(28%)
9. Call, talk to, or be with someone (28%)
10. Control thoughts (e.g., think calming thoughts, try not to think about situation)(27%)

Note. Behaviours ranked according to percentage endorsing item. Table includes the top ten (of 29) ranking behaviours. From The Origin of Everyday Moods (p.126), by R.E. Thayer, 1996, New York: Oxford University Press.

In conclusion, in this section I examined the meaning of emotion and how listening to music and visiting the outdoors affects people's emotions. In the next section, I will specifically consider how emotions are affected by listening to music and how emotions are affected by being in natural settings.

Table 4

Behaviours Used to Reduce Nervousness, Tension, or Anxiety

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1. Call, talk to, or be with someone (59%)
2. Control thoughts (e.g., think calming thoughts, try not to think about situation)(58%)
3. Listen to music (53%)
4. Exercise (this may include taking a walk)(44%)
5. Use relaxation techniques (44%)
6. Rest, take a nap, close eyes or sleep (37%)
7. Engage in nervous behaviour (e.g., pacing, biting nails)(31%)
8. Engage in stress management activities (e.g., get organized, plan ahead)(31%)
9. Tend to chores (e.g., housework)(27%)
10. Watch TV or a movie (27%)

Note. Behaviours ranked according to percentage endorsing item. Table includes the found top ten (of 22) ranking behaviours. From The Origin of Everyday Moods (p.128), by R.E. Thayer, 1996, New York: Oxford University Press.

Music and Emotion

Davies (1994) poses the question why do people concern themselves with listening to music even when it may make them sad? A search for the answer would explore the aesthetics of the arts and follow a trail of philosophical explanations of how, when, and why music has its greatest impact. Levinson (1990) offers eight benefits of listening to music (that express negative emotions) as follows: 1) apprehending expression, 2) emotional catharsis, 3) savoring feeling, 4) understanding feeling, 5) emotional assurance (i.e., support), 6) emotional resolution, 7) expressive potency, and 8) emotional communion (with artist). DeNora (2000) found that, when interviewed on the topic of music in daily life, people seemed to just know what they needed emotionally and, furthermore, people can self-program their music material to suit emotional needs.

Emotional response is central to understanding why we concern ourselves with music. Maybe, as DeNora (2000) found, people can consume music like a drug to attain or accompany an emotion. In an attempt to clarify how music affects us emotionally, I will consider topics important to understanding how music, emotion, and the listener are linked. Following is a discussion on aesthetics, the experience of the listener, and the object of emotion.

Aesthetics

Aesthetics is a line of philosophy that is concerned with different aspects of art, including creativeness, expressiveness, art forms, and the effects of art. Discussions in aesthetics have explored why the expressed emotions in art (and music) do not seem to generate corresponding emotions in the receiver. For example, the sadness a listener encounters from a piece of music may not be genuine sadness, but rather a type of sadness unique to the arts. The effect of a piece of art, a painting for example, may be believed to reflect a certain emotion, like sadness. However, the feeling of sadness that the onlooker feels may not be a genuine emotion of sadness, even if they are highly affected by the work.

Philosophers of aesthetics use descriptive terms to express different types of emotions, as follows: anaemic emotion (Davies, 1994), emotion-like emotions (Levinson, 1990), the sadness in the St. Bernard's face (Kivy, 1980), and the redness to the apple (Bouwsma, 1965). I have chosen the above terms because prominent music philosophers who have published works on music and aesthetics use these terms. I will next briefly consider the aforementioned terms as they relate to how music is experienced by the listener.

An anaemic emotion is a watered down version of an emotion. The emotion experienced may be the emotion of sadness, but in a form that does not tend to exhibit the behavioural characteristics of the sad emotion (Davies, 1994). For example, in the case of listening to sad music, a listener may connect with the piece of music and believe that it is sad music, and then feel anaemic sadness, but not become fully sad or as sad as the expressed emotion. Hence, anaemic emotions may offer us some insight as to why someone would listen to sad music; that is, perhaps it offers an experience of an emotion in the volume we can handle without becoming sad.

An alternative view to an anaemic emotion is an emotion-like emotions where the emotion is depersonalized, and the listener is separated from the real emotion (Levinson, 1990). In the case of listening to sad music, a listener may believe that they are hearing sad music, and may think that they are sad because of the music. However, the emotions they are feeling do not touch them in the same way, they do not become sad. What the listener experiences then is a sad emotion unique to the arts (and music). Perhaps, this is like a "virtual sadness".

A similar proposal to the emotion-like explanation of emotions is what Kivy (1980) calls the sadness in the St. Bernard's face, or what Bouwsma's (1965) calls the redness to the apple. The sadness in a St. Bernard's face suggests that the St. Bernard is sad; however, it is only a surface feature and not a true indicator of the inner reality (as is redness to the apple). For example, in music, a listener may only be capable of recognizing a common emotion expressed in a piece of music, but that emotion is not transferred to the listener. Hence, the music is understood as expressing a basic emotion, but does not result in the listener feeling the same emotion. Likewise, Bouwsma (p. 49) describes this phenomena, the sadness in music is more like the redness to the apple, than "the burp to the cider"

Whether the emotion is anaemic, emotion-like, virtual, or the sadness in the St. Bernard's face, music philosophers seem at odds with one another as to how people really experience emotion in music. However, it appears clear that the expressed emotion in music is different, to some degree, than the emotion felt by the listener.

Theories of how we listen to music.

In consideration of music's expressive possibilities, Davies (1994) relates how a listener responds to music in his arousal theory as follows:

M is E = M evokes E in Labc, where M is music, E is emotion, L is listener and abc represents the relevant circumstances of the listener (p. 187).

Potentially, Davies' equation offers a good starting point for considering how music and emotion relate to the listener.

If music is expressive of emotion (i.e., M is E), then it is only true if the particular piece of music evokes an emotional response in the listener. The listener, however, is bound to the circumstance (Labc). The listener's circumstance, whatever it may be, dictates whether the music is expressive of an emotion, perhaps unique to the listener. The circumstance of the listener forces us to consider music as not a universally, expressive language. In all, Davies' arousal theory questions whether music is absolutely expressive of the same emotion for everyone and shows us that listener's circumstance plays an important role.

In a similar vein, Jerrold Levinson (1990, p. 320) describes listening conditions necessary for a powerful, emotional response to music as being: (a) the music should be in a familiar style, but not to the extent that the familiarity evokes boredom, (b) the listener needs to be focused on the music, and (c) the listener should possess a receptive attitude to the music, and be willing to identify with the music. Levinson's first condition may be considered to involve the importance of cultural or ethnic backgrounds, as the listener needs to be familiar with the style and other aspects of the music. Furthermore, Levinson states that if a listener is familiar with how an instrument is played, in what context, and even how it feels and is made, greater appreciation of the music may result (see also Qureshi, 2000). Studies on the preference of music in different cultures and ethnic groups support Levinson's claim regarding familiarity (Brittin, 1996; McCrary, 1993).

Levinson's second condition separates background music from foreground music. For example, this may be the difference between the ambient music in shopping centres to that of dance clubs, where attention is somewhat coerced by loud music. Lastly, the third condition relates the situational context, deciding if the listener is willing and capable of relating to the music. For example, people who are unfamiliar with the rave scene and prefer classical music anyway may avoid rave music.

Levinson's (1990) conditions of listening necessary for a powerful emotional response to music reinforce Davies' (1994) arousal theory by emphasizing the importance of the individual. In addition, Kivy (1999) adds that the listener needs to like the music if emotions are to be affected. This seems like an obvious inclusion, but Kivy's point emphasizes the important considerations of musical preference and familiarity. Hence, without liking the piece of music, a listener, at most, may become annoyed by hearing it, or may simply ignore it.

Intentional Object of Emotion

The listener's intentional object of emotion during the music will highly influence the type of emotional response (Davies, 1994; Kivy, 1999; Levinson, 1990) and therefore a person's emotional response is difficult to predict. For instance, as freely as thoughts come and go, so do the potential objects of our emotion. If our thoughts have an overall theme (e.g., sad memories) our emotion would likely be one of sadness. Conversely, if there is a combination of happy and sad memories (objects), it becomes more difficult to predict the resulting emotion in any realistic manner. Emotions may be the result of various objects including memories and objects in our surroundings.

For instance, in studies combining objects, like listening to music and viewing paintings, Limbert and Polzella (1998) and Stratton and Zalanowski (1989) found music to be a powerful intensifier of the emotion believed to be exhibited in the painting. Stratton and Zalanowski found that music actually dictated the emotion that the participants believed to be expressed by the painting. Their findings suggest that the intentional object of emotion for participants was more focused on the music than the paintings with the audible senses being more influential than visual stimuli. Limbert and Polzell's study found that when the painting was accompanied with music that matched the apparent expressed emotion in the painting, the emotion expressed in the painting was intensified. Similarly, McKinney (1990), in a study on music and imagery, found that music intensified emotions.

The source of the music may be a prominent object and the focus of the listener's attention. For instance, the instrument used to create the music, as well as the performer, may be the focus of attention and may elicit memories and meanings associated with the instrument and its culture. For example, Qureshi (2000) found that the sarangi (an Indian musical instrument) was considered as an "intense icon of affect" (p. 805), embedded in religious, political, cultural and social meanings. Interestingly, Qureshi describes musical sound as to "immediately evoke a situated experience" (p. 810) inferring, therefore, that music as an object (and the type instrument played) may connect cognitive thoughts to specific cultures and meanings. Stokes (as cited in Qureshi) states that music is unmatched by any other social activity in doing this.

In the case where people vary their focus of attention (e.g., from music to memories, to interest, to an instrument and its culture, to their natural surroundings) the resulting emotion is the combined effect of each of the objects focussed on. Therefore, any feelings associated with each object will combine in some fashion to create an experience which is almost impossible to predict by others.

Nature and Emotion

Aspects of the environment that affect people's emotions are by and large unexplored (McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; Russell & Snodgrass, 1987; Staats, Gatersleben & Hartig, 1997; Ulrich, 1983). Moreover, the overall effect of the many would-be objects of emotion in a natural environment makes understanding the resulting emotion rather complex (Russell & Snodgrass, 1987). In an attempt to categorize the objects that people focus on in an natural environment, Borrie (as cited in McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998, p. 403) groups the objects as follows: (a) nature as place, (b) self, (c) others, (d) emotions and affect, (e) task or activity.[5] However Borrie's groupings, if considered together, would make my thesis overly complex. Of particular interest for my study, then, are the affective qualities of the natural environment.

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[5] See also Scherl (1990) for a taxonomy of wilderness experience domains.

The features of the natural environment upon which people appraise the affective qualities of the place (i.e., the ambience), affect people's relationship to the environment (McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; Russell & Snodgrass, 1987; Ulrich, 1983). To further explore the affective qualities of the natural environment, I will first consider the temporality of emotion in the natural environment. Following will be a discussion of the complexity of a natural area as it is related to people's emotional preferences. Lastly, I will discuss the descriptors used by people to describe the affective qualities of a natural environment.

Temporality, Emotion and the Natural Environment

The concept of time is both objective and subjective, with the latter being more relevant to an experienced emotion. Affective experiences attained from the natural environment (and music) then are inherently intertwined with the subjective elements of time. Hence, the affective response to a natural environment changes and is changed by the experience of time. However, few studies in the area of nature-based leisure have considered the ever-present issue of lived time as it interacts with activities or events.

Lived time is one of four existentialisms identified by Merleau-Ponty (1962; see also Van Manen, 1997).[6] In other words, temporality is a life-world theme believed to be present in every culture and social structure. For instance, in many modern societies, people have clocks as reminders of time strapped to their wrists, in their cars, and on the walls. Moreover, the objective elements of time organize our daily routines—we live by it. But how do people experience time? Lived time is not always experienced objectively through hours and minutes; rather, time is experienced in subjective ways. For instance, when we enjoy ourselves, time "speeds-up"; when we are bored, time "slows-down" (Van Manen, 1997).

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[6] Other existentialisms have been identified as lived body, lived space, and lived relation.

Additionally, emotions experienced during events become molded into the past, future, and present. For instance, an emotion is affected by the learned experiences of previous events and emotions; as well, an emotion is affected by the anticipation of a future emotion. Hence, the temporality of an experienced emotion is not bound objectively to time, but rather, subjectively to events, which, in hindsight, create our "emotional biographies" (Denzin, 1984, p. 79).

Although most studies in the area of nature-based leisure measure experience in a pre and/or post hoc manner (McIntyre, 1998; McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998), a few studies have attempted to capture the experience as it unfolds (i.e., see Hull, Michael, Walker & Roggenbuck, 1996; Hull & Michael, 1995; McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; McIntyre, 1998). For example, Hull et al. (1996) found aspects of time to be as important as the activity and the type of environment participating in. Hull et al. (1996) believed peak episodes of an experience could occur at any point; hence, it was deemed important to measure the experience at different points (i.e., at four points, being the beginning and end as well as every 15-30 minutes). Likewise, Hull, Stewart, and Yi (1992) measured the recreation experience of a day hike at 12 points and found that moods and the perceived scenic beauty of the landscape changed throughout the day.

With respect to the temporality of emotion, Ulrich (1983) has modelled the affective response to the natural environment (see Figure 3). Ulrich's model begins with people's initial mood prior to assessment of the natural environment. Initial mood states influence how we evaluate objects and environments (Russell & Snodgrass, 1987).[7] However, an emotion may also be greatly influenced at the onset of seeing the natural environment in a like/dislike feeling that precedes cognitive processes.

Ulrich identified this pre-cognitive affective response as "preferenda" (see also Zajonc, 1980). Preferenda may occur very quickly requiring little stimuli. For example, if a person visited a forest that had a lot of broken tree limbs dangling overhead, the emotional response may be one of dislike, as a result of the potential danger.

One limitation of Ulrich's (1983) model, as well as other studies on environment and affect, is that only visual perceptions of the environment are considered. Objects of our other senses, like olfactory and taste, hearing, and touch are mostly uncharted; although Ittelson (as cited in Taylor, 1990) advises that all environmental perception related research should include multiple senses and focuses of attention. Russell and Snodgrass (1987) concur with Ittelson, stating an environment is experienced in many ways, including the subconscious effects of chemicals breathed, natural light exposure, colours and the related symbolic meanings that affect people's emotions. I will next discuss studies that have included visual affects of natural environments.

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[7] Moods states influence how people make appraisals--commonly phrased the "Razaran effect" (see Russell & Snodgrass, 1987).

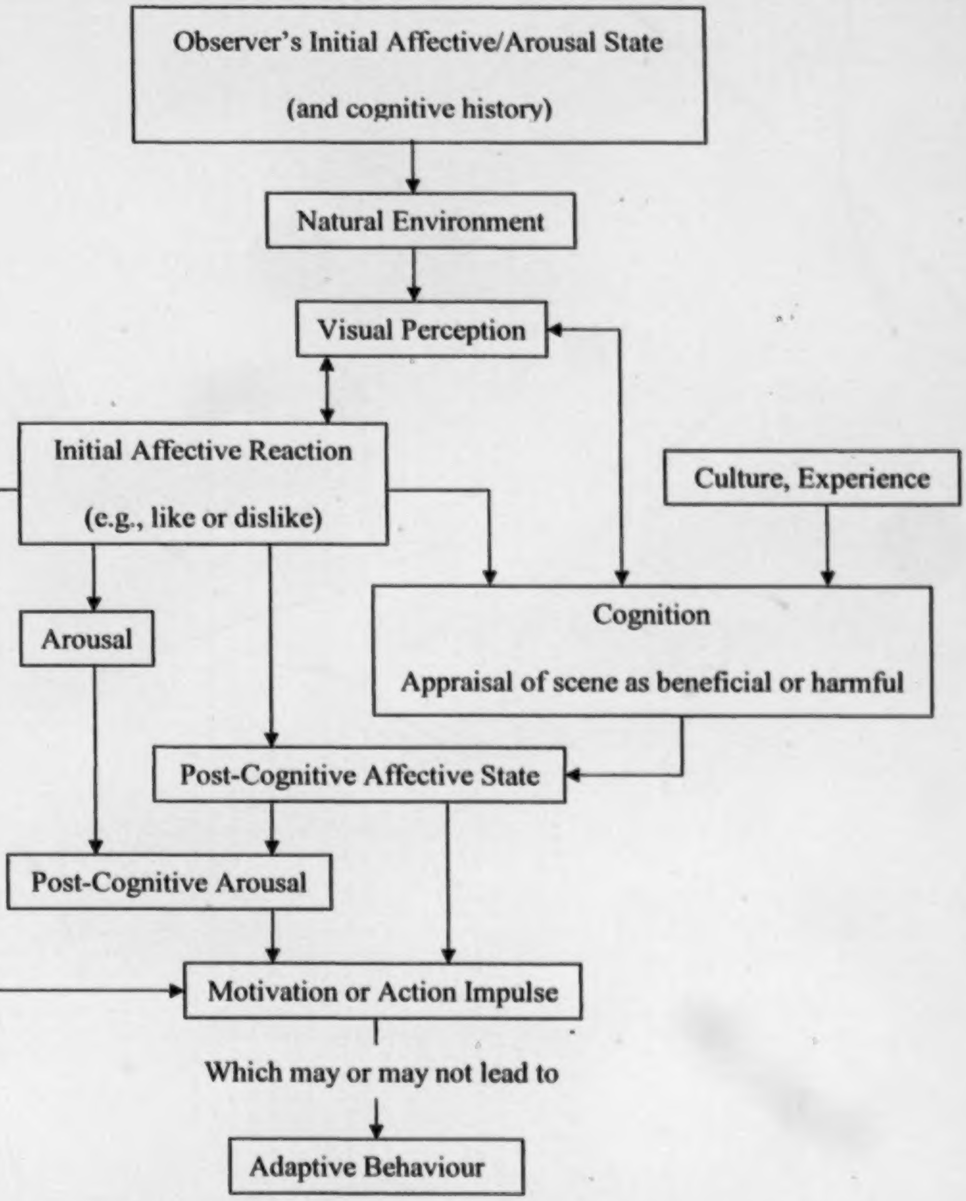
Observer's Initial Affective/Arousal State
(and cognitive history)
Natural Environment
Visual Perception
Initial Affective Reaction
(e.g., like or dislike)
Culture, Experience
Arousal
Cognition
Appraisal of scene as beneficial or harmful
Post-Cognitive Affective State
Post-Cognitive Arousal
Motivation or Action Impulse
Which may or may not lead to
Adaptive Behaviour

Figure 3. Model of affective response to a natural environment over time.

Note. From "Aesthetic and Affective Response to Natural Environment," (p. 91) by R.S. Ulrich (1983), in I. Altman & J.F. Wohlwill (Eds.), Behaviour and the natural environment (chap. 3), New York: Plenum Press.

Complexity of a Natural Environment and Consequential Affect

Hull, Stewart, and Yi (1992) found that, as people hiked through various types of landscapes, their moods were affected. Other studies (Staats, Gatersleben & Hartig's, 1997; Ulrich, 1983)[8] support Hull et al.'s findings, and furthermore, found that the complexity of natural landscapes is a factor to the affective qualities of an area. Studies involving the affective aspects of a natural environment tend to group the objects of the place together. For example, objects like the horizon or crawling insects alone are not considered apart from the overall ambience of the place. The ambience of the place is what researchers seem to equate with the complexity of the place.

Complexity in a natural environment is related to the number of independently received objects able to be seen, the relative difficulty of movement, and the difficulty of orienteering oneself (Ulrich, 1983; Staats, Gatersleben & Hartig, 1997). Complexity is also linked to the density of the area (Staats et al., 1997). For example, an open field on a hillside would be considered low in complexity (and density) because of the ease of navigating over obstacles and orienteering, thereby requiring fewer objects to be necessarily focused on. In contrast, a narrow trail through dense brush with a lot of obstructions would be considered highly complex because of the difficulty of navigation and orienteering, thereby requiring close attention to objects (e.g., fallen trees and brush to walk through and other landscape features for orienteering direction).

The complexity of an environment has also been considered in terms of the consequential emotional response, and therefore, also by dimensions of arousal and pleasantness. For instance, Staats, Gatersleben and Hartig (1997) found that, when a natural landscape is complex, the levels of arousal increase and a lack of orientation decreases the pleasantness of the area. Moreover, Ulrich (1983) states that the qualities of complexity and pleasantness, together, form an inverted-U, where environments that are either high or low in complexity are unpleasant. Ulrich also found natural areas that appear to be low in complexity (e.g., a field that is easy to navigate and orientate) might even lead to boredom. Ulrich (1983) concludes that a mixed forest with some views is the most pleasing. Conversely, Rosegrant (1976) found that types of religious experiences occur when the setting is communal (e.g., a vista or area where the works of nature are visible on a large scale, like a mountaintop or dessert). In other words, areas of low complexity may evoke emotional responses as well.

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[8] See Berlyne (1971) for a survey of studies on environmental complexity and preference.

In all, the complexity of an area appears to affect people emotionally when traveling over the landscape (i.e., going from point A to point B) is of issue. However, as Rosegrant (1976) found, people who are not traveling over the landscape may well find pleasure in the simplicity of a field of wildflowers, or in the vastness of deserts, oceans, and lakes. Furthermore, dense brush may also be of interest and of pleasure for those who enjoy bird watching or looking for animal signs and tracks. Hence, depending on the activity involved and the interests of the individuals, various aspects of the natural environment may affect people's emotions.

Descriptors of Affect in a Natural Environment

Regardless of the activity, the terms that people use to describe the affective qualities of a natural environment may be the best indicator of their experience. Russell and Lanius's (1984) model (see Figure 4) illustrates the various natural environment adjectives of affect as related to one another on a circumplex (along the dimensions of pleasantness and arousal). The terms included in the model are the affective appraisals of a natural environment; hence, some of the words, like "repulsive", "pretty", and "monotonous" may not sound like adjectives of emotion.

Because an affective appraisal of a natural environment is closely linked to the experienced emotion, some confusion may arise (Russell & Snodgrass, 1987). The confusion stems from not knowing the difference between someone stating an opinion of how an environment would probably make them feel, and the feeling someone acquires from actually experiencing the affective properties of the place. For instance, a person may look at an image (picture) of a natural environment and state that the place is affectively pretty or serene without ever having been to that place. But descriptors like pretty (or serene) take on affective meaning by the relative position of the term on the circumplex. Hence, pretty is closely related in meaning to the terms pleasing and nice. The emotion the natural environment conjures in this case then has a neutral level of arousal and is highly pleasing. This confusion of the real or appraised emotion of a natural environment is analogous to the real or appraised emotion heard in music. For instance, when people describe a song as being pretty or beautiful, are they saying that they can identify that the song has pretty aspects to it, or are they feeling that emotion?

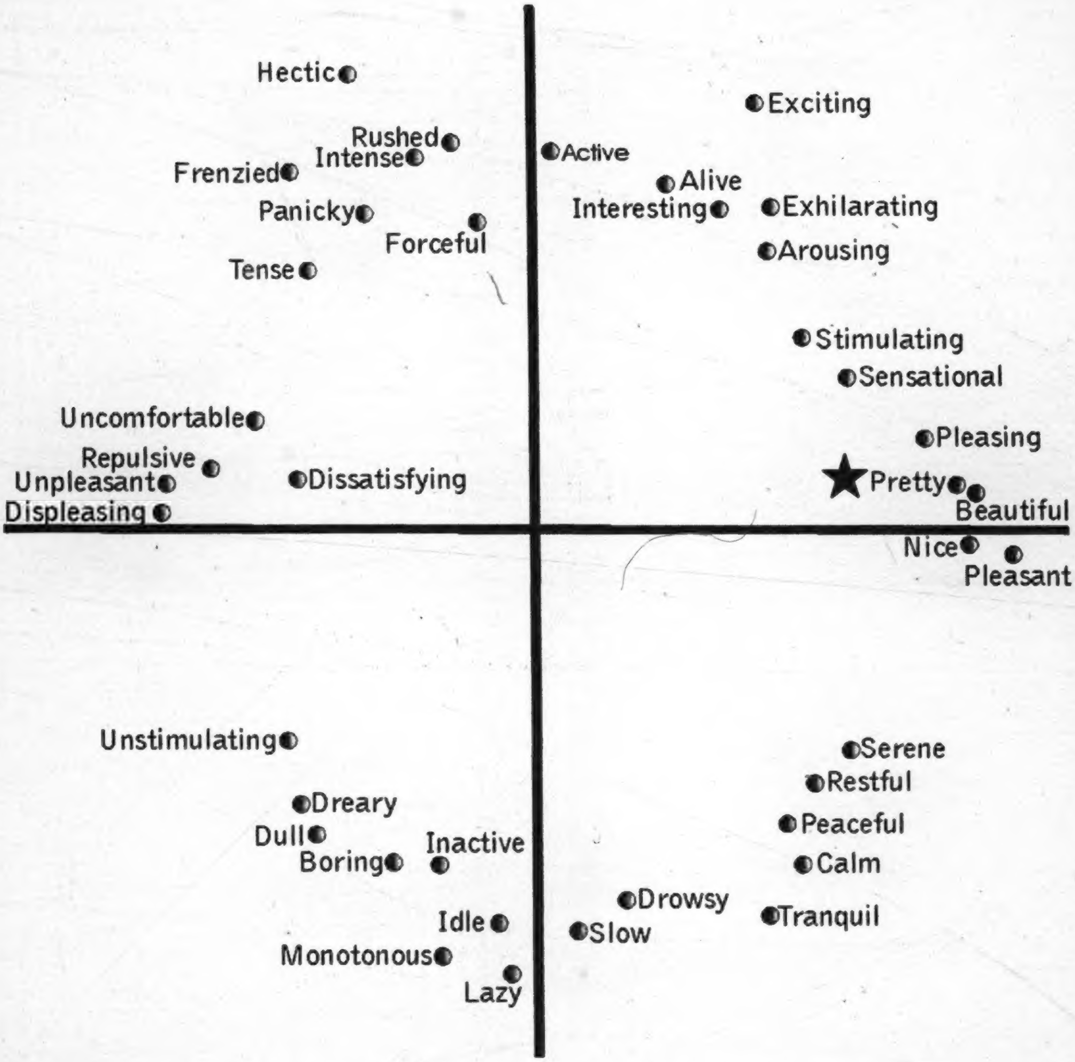
Hectic
Rushed
Intense
Frenzied
Panicky
Forceful
Tense
Exciting
Active
Alive
Interesting
Exhilarating
Arousing
Stimulating
Sensational
Uncomfortable
Repulsive
Unpleasant
Displeasing
Dissatisfying
Pleasing
Pretty
Beautiful
Nice
Pleasant
Unstimulating
Dreary
Dull
Boring
Inactive
Idle
Monotonous
Lazy
Drowsy
Slow
Serene
Restful
Peaceful
Calm
Tranquil

Figure 4. Descriptors of affective qualities of places. The star represents area of interest.

Note. From "Adaption level and the affective appraisal of environments" by J.A. Russell and U.F. Lanius, 1984, Journal of Environmental Psychology, 4, 119-135.

Conclusion

Interestingly, when people were asked, during Thayer's (1996) study, which activity that they found to be the most 'successful' behaviour for reducing anxiety, religious or spiritual activity prevailed, followed by music. Change in affect by spiritual aspects or music listening behaviours was also supported in an earlier study by Greeley (1975) that considered trigger behaviours for 'religious experiences'. The most effective trigger was 'listening to music', followed closely by experiencing the 'beauties of nature'. Once again, it is apparent that listening to music and the outdoors (natural environments) are high on the list of behaviours that affect people emotionally.

Listening to music was acknowledged by Thayer (1996) to be a surprising result that revealed music–related activities as effective mood regulators. However, in consideration of Thayer's data, I would suggest that 'listening to music' was one of the more impressive behaviours of mood change. For instance, if we consider all three of Thayer's tables (i.e., Tables 2, 3 & 4), 'listening to music' is the most consistent behaviour used by people to alter aspects of their mood, followed by 'call or talk to someone' and 'control thoughts'.

Thayer (1996) points out that when people were asked which activities were the most effective, 'exercise' was the dominant behaviour for changing bad moods, energy levels, and reducing anxiety. But, 'exercise' was consistently ranked lower than 'listening to music' by people in their actual behaviours used to alter moods (in Tables 2, 3 & 4). However, Thayer points out that listening to music, talking with someone, and cognitive approaches were effective overall as well.

Behaviours related to the outdoors ranked well if we consider that going outside and getting fresh air, as well as getting exercise (including a walk) are related to most activities that occur during nature-based leisure. For example, nature-based leisure activities may include being out in the fresh air while walking, backpacking, portaging, climbing, or paddling.

The object of emotion (i.e., the cognitive aspect) is central to the experience of emotion. The experience of an emotion includes three steps as previously mentioned, there being: (a) an encounter and a decision about a present event or circumstance (object) as being pleasant or otherwise, (b) a resulting emotion, and (c) being aware of the emotion felt. Basically the structure of this resulting emotion can be described in terms of its dimensions of pleasure-displeasure and arousal-sleepiness continuums. Russell's (1987) circumplex of affect, shown in Figure 2, shows various examples of different affects and the resulting placement on the aforementioned dimensions.

Managing an emotion or a mood requires that people are aware of their mood and pursue behaviours to alter or sustain it. Similar in part to the structure of affect, mood change is conceptualised as follows: a change in the level of energy and a reducing of tension. Basically, the emotion is experienced, and then acted upon. This may be done through the use of music (a particularly powerful behaviour for changing affect) and various other behaviours.

Lastly, the experience of emotion has been considered structurally along the dimensions of pleasure-displeasure and arousal-sleepiness. The adjectives commonly used by people to describe their emotions have been located on these dimensions.

Methods

In my review of the literature, I considered the relationship between emotion to both the experience of the natural environment and to the experience of listening to music. Similarly, Denzin (1984) believes the study of emotionality should reside fundamentally in all human disciplines. The phenomenological method is particularly suitable for studies involving the experience of emotion because uncovered meanings of the phenomenon remain closely linked to the lived experience, which is recounted through thick descriptions (Denzin). Hence, after reading the phenomenological account, a person should better understand how the phenomenon is experienced. Because the phenomenological method is not commonly used in the area of nature-based leisure, I will briefly introduce some aspects of phenomenological research methods followed by a detailed approach to my methods including: the data collection process, data analysis and synthesis, and discussion of findings sections.

To explore my research question (i.e., what is the experience and meaning of a nature-based leisure event that incorporates (live) music), I sought the experiences of those who have utilized music during a nature-based leisure event. In so doing, valuable insights were gained into another way people experience the natural environment. Emotional connections to the natural environment are valuable in that such connections may lead to behaviours that protect natural ecosystems. Hence, this type of research would be of interest for others involved with music, environmental, and nature-based leisure research, as well as outdoor recreational leaders and individuals interested in as much.

Phenomenological Research Methods

Edmond Husserl is generally credited as being the person who developed phenomenology (Macann, 1993). The term phenomenology stems from the Greek word "phainomenon" which means an "appearance" (Stewart & Mickunas, 1990, p. 3). Appearance of objects in our consciousness is how we experience the lived world and our consciousness is always directed toward an object (commonly referred to as intentionality). Thus, the phenomenological method differs from the natural scientific approach in that it focuses directly on the lived experience as it "appears" in the consciousness.

Denzin (1984) further clarifies the differences between natural scientific methods and phenomenological methods that consider emotions as follows: (a) emotion must be researched as a lived experience (qualitative method), (b) the natural scientific approach concerning emotions must be set aside and variables and factors are not sought, (c) the essence of emotion should be sought and vigilantly described, with universal features interpreted, and (d) the research process is neither completely inductive (i.e., create a theory from the facts) nor deductive (i.e., from theory consider the facts and create hypotheses) but rather it involves intuition, investigation and understanding (p. 11-12). In addition, imposing experimental designs or prefabricated surveys is considered to alter and impose upon the actual experience as it would otherwise be lived and expressed (Van Manen, 1997; Moustakas, 1994). Hence, the phenomenological method has the researcher consider everyday situations in the context lived, thereby remaining closely grounded in the "lived experience".

Van Manen (1997) and Moustakas (1994) claim that a phenomenological method is most clearly indicated through its data analysis procedures. Although there are no fixed or standard methods employed in phenomenological investigations, I will next discuss some of the general processes, and then describe the specifics of my data analysis approach.

Phenomenological Processes

Moustakas (1994) describes the general processes of phenomenological methods as including epoche, reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis.

The epoche is a state-of-mind where the researcher remains open to the possible meanings that may arise from the research. In other words, the challenge of epoche is to break free from our prejudgments (and theories) about an experience or phenomena so that we may experience it freshly, and with an open mind (also referred to as "bracketing"). However, it is impossible to break free from one's orientation to a phenomenon completely—even words in our consciousness have the interpretations of language and meaning.

Reduction begins when remembered feelings, thoughts, and images of an experience are expressed, a process where the original meanings are blurred or reduced through the medium of language. Hence, the ability of a person to describe an event along with the researcher's ability to capture and present the meanings is critical. This process begins as a purely descriptive project, where the original language and meanings are preserved (Giorgi, 1985; Ashworth, 1996). This initial reduction is sometimes called horizonalization, where all meanings are considered equally important (Moustakas, 1994).

Next, is the interpretive process of imaginative variation where the horizon of meaning units is considered from different perspectives. Then, upon critical reflection, themes and structures of the experience are developed from the meaning units (Husserl, 1970). Lastly, the synthesis of all the data is combined and presented to expose the essence(s) of the phenomena.

Taken as a whole, Van Manen (1997) describes a good phenomenological representation as being composed of lived experience, recollects lived experience, is validated by lived experience, and validates lived experience (sometimes called the validating circle of enquiry). In what follows, I outline my data collection process, data analysis, and summary sections.

Data Collection Process

This section includes my sampling frame, gaining consent and rapport, data collection, recording and storing data.

Sampling Frame

Participants were purposely selected to include adults with at least one experience in bringing and playing a musical instrument (including song) during a nature-based leisure outing. One example of an acceptable participant would be a person who has taken and played a harmonica on a short walk in a natural area. Another example may be a person who engages in song on an extended camping trip. People who bring artificially produced music (e.g., recordings of music) were not included in this study.

Once it was established that an individual met the above criteria, preference was given to someone who had experienced the phenomenon within the last year (in order to improve his or her ability to recollect experiences). Finally, if the individual met the criteria stated above, preference was given to achieving a diverse group (e.g., diversity may be achieved through different types of instruments and nature-based leisure contexts utilized). In an attempt to attain the essence of the experience, eight to ten participants (Creswell, 1998) were sought for this study.

Locating individuals to participate in study.

Finding individuals to participate in this study was accomplished by looking in suitable locations. In light of the fact that the research was performed in Edmonton, it was appropriate to search for people who lived there (i.e., were geographically feasible). Places that would find people involved in nature-based leisure activities were various popular "trailheads" to natural areas, stores that sell outdoor equipment, outing clubs, and "email groups" on the Internet. Likewise, a search for participants at music stores and clubs were appropriate for finding individuals who may favoured music in conjunction with nature-based leisure. A brief description of the study, basic participant requirements, and a contact phone number and e-mail address were provided (see Appendix B).

Consent and Rapport

Once an individual made contact and demonstrated interest in becoming a participant, a more detailed explanation of the study was offered. Upon being chosen, the participant was informed of his or her rights with respect to participating in the study and was required to give their written consent, outlining their willingness to participate in the study (see Appendix C and D). Consent forms approved by the University of Alberta Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Ethics Committee were used.

Data Collection

As is common in a phenomenological study, interviews (and possible follow-up interviews) with open-ended questions were used (Henderson 1990; Kvale 1996; McPhail 1995). Open-ended questions allow adequate freedom for people to recount their experience through stories. Moreover, Chase (1995) states that people often relate meanings through stories even when given close-ended questions. This may be the result of close-ended questions that do not adhere to the experiences of the participants and, consequently, are answered in a way that is relevant to them. Hence, asking participants overly specific questions may not be sensitive to their unique perspective.

When the situation arose where interviews were not possible, then the data was collected through a written account. In a similar manner, Fischer (1985), in a phenomenological study on self-deception, asked participants to make a journal-like entry of a time when they tried to deceive themselves. After the journal entry was handed back to the researcher, it was looked over and (if deemed necessary) there was a follow-up entry. The follow-up entry asked for elaboration on points that the participant had initially written. Van Manen (1997) states that the process of writing acts to stimulate memories of events, but cautions that this method also stimulates unrelated topics.

In what follows, I will outline the interview process in three chronological steps: preparatory steps and questions, briefing the interviewee and gaining rapport, and during the interview process itself.

Preparatory steps and question.

In preparation for the interaction, it is essential that issues like the meeting place and the question be thought through and organized.

The meeting place (and time) for the interview was determined through e-mails or phone calls arranged well in advance of the interview date. I favoured holding the interview in a natural environment (e.g., an urban park). The benefits of holding interviews in natural area's is that it may prompt memories of the experience that they are to relate. Moreover, the natural environment is less formal for an interview that may work to attaining a better set of data on sensitive or personal stories.

I asked the interviewee to bring their favoured instrument (i.e., one previously used in an nature-based leisure event—including voice). The reasoning for this is to evoke memories and feelings of past experiences (i.e., a nature-based leisure events combined with music), and as a prop to help break-the-ice. As well, I brought an instrument to the meeting.

As stated earlier, my research question is: What is the emotional experience of a nature-based leisure event, which incorporates (live) music? The primary question put forth to the interviewee then, was as follows: Please tell me about an experience that you have had in which you brought and played a musical instrument (or song) during a nature outing.

Briefing the interviewee and gaining rapport.

At the earliest stages of the interview (prior to asking questions), it is appropriate to gain rapport, inform the interviewee of the interview process (Moustakas, 1994). Henderson 1990; Kvale 1996; McCracken 1988), and ensure the consent form is reviewed and signed. Aspects of the interview process emphasized included: the reasons for recording the interview, the length of the interview, how the study will be put to use, asking if there are any questions, explaining the meanings of words that may be difficult to interpret (such as nature-based leisure), and the reasons why they were chosen for the study.

The interview process was organized by an itinerary, which acted as the framework for the interview. It contained the structure of the interview, the interview question, and probes. Appendix A, the Interview Itinerary, illustrates this. The interview itinerary begins with objective features like the meeting place, date, and time that helped with organizing the data after the interviewing process has been completed.

Furthermore, if necessary, the participant was offered guidance towards the type of information that is sought from them. The guidance offered was similar to the advice that Van Manen (p. 54-65) offers to researchers as follows: (a) describe the experience as it was lived, (b) include feelings, moods, emotions, and cognitive aspects, (c) choose a specific event that is still vivid, and (d) include multiple sensory descriptions. In conclusion, once a desirable level of comfort had been established, the interview began.

If the participant did not describe the experience in sufficient depth or detail, probes were used. Moustakas (1994) outlines a series of probing questions that can help attain a richer data set during a phenomenological study interview. Adapted from Moustakas' aforementioned outline, I used the following probes if needed:

(a) What about this experience stands out for you?

(b) How did this experience affect you at the time?

   a. Did you find the music arousing in any way?

   b. Was the music creating feelings of pleasantness in some way?

(c) What were you feeling during the experience?

   a. How were you feeling before, during, and after the music was played?

(d) What were you concentrating on throughout the experience?

   a. How did concentrating on ______ make you feel?

(e) Can you describe any details as experienced by your other senses?

(f) What made you decide to play the music when you did?

   a. Were you trying to attain a particular mood?

(g) Describe the area that you were in.

   a. Was there anything about the place that encouraged you to play the music?

(h) How did the area affect the music?

(i) Approximately how long did the music last?

   a. Did any part of the surroundings appear different after the music stopped?

      i. Did the way you experienced your surroundings change at all?

(j) How did this experience affect the people who were with you?

(k) Overall, what words best describe your feelings before, during, and after playing the music?

(l) Is there any part of the experience that you have left out?

During the interview and probes.

During the interview, aspects that required attention were engaging in epoche and the interviewer's mannerisms. As stated earlier, the challenge of epoche is to remain open-minded, bracketing prejudgments about the questions discussed. Chase (1990) suggests that the interviewer should demonstrate thoughtfulness and interest in the participant's responses during the interview, as these characteristics may lead the interviewee to offer rich responses. Lastly, an interviewer should be a good listener, as opposed to taking up too much time speaking.

When it appears that the interview has come to an end, Kvale (1996) proposes that closing remarks may include: a description of what has been covered during the interview and an offer of one last chance to add to what has been said. As well, the interviewee may be reminded that she/he is welcome to view the completed study and should also be reminded of the possibility of another interview in the future. Finally, interviewees should be thanked for their time.

Recording Information

Typical of interviewing procedures, the interview process was audio taped with a recorder capable of recording in the interview environment. If the interview setting was noisy, individual microphones for both the interviewer and interviewee were supplied. The microphone was tested prior to the commencement of the interview in the interview environment to ensure that the quality of the recording was adequate. Other considerations included ensuring that the recording device had a good power source, be it from battery power or electricity. Another consideration was be to ensure that the tapes were labeled with dates and names prior to use.

Besides the recording of the interview, notes were taken after the interview. This aspect of data collection is of considerable worth, as it records various aspects not picked-up by the recording device (Kvale, 1996). The aspects included body language or the uneasiness of the interviewee. It was useful for recording the impressions of the interviewer and to describe the context of the particular interview.

Organizing the Data

Organizing the data that has been collected during the research process is imperative. Loss of data may result in frustration or, worse, the termination of the study. All data, then, was organized efficiently so as to be easy to retrieve. Furthermore, backup copies of the data safeguarded against a loss of original data. The original data collected in this study included audiotapes and text.

Organizing the data in an efficient manner was also accomplished by creating a chart that tracked the data. The chart aided to quickly acquire a visual representation of the research process, including dates, activities as well as where to find any of the data collected. In so doing, a better understanding of the overall study was achieved. All identifying information was removed to protect the anonymity of participants. Finally, the primary data materials (i.e., field notes, interview taped recordings, and written accounts) were locked separate from secondary materials (i.e., analysis and subsequent drafts).

After each interview was completed, the tape was transcribed verbatim. All hand written texts taken during the research process was also typed. The complete interview itinerary, including the notes taken during and after the interview were transcribed. All original notes, including the interview itinerary was saved and duplicated as an added safeguard. Furthermore, all data, both audio-recorded and hand written, that had been converted into digital format were copied onto a computer disk. Two copies of the digital data were produced, one of which was stored at a place other than the researcher's residence to further protect against an unforeseen calamity.

Data Analysis and Synthesis

Amongst various possible approaches, I have chosen to base my data analysis procedure on Moustakas' (1994). Although Moustakas offers little direction on how to synthesize the data, Van Manen (1997) offers alternative synthesizing approaches. After briefly describing Moustakas' methods, I will tentatively discuss how the synthesis of data may occur, with the final decision presented in a later section.

One aspect of Moustakas' (1994) data analysis approach is the inclusion of the researcher's experience. A phenomenological study is often strongly connected to the interests and experiences of the researcher (Van Manen, 1997; Moustakas); hence, if the researcher first considers her/his own account, the researcher may perceive the account of others on the same topic more easily. In addition, the researcher may develop more insight into the phenomenon.

Moustakas' (1994, p. 121-122) approach to data analysis is as follows: (a) researcher first offers her/his own experience, (b) from verbatim transcript, consider each statement and its relevance to the experience, (c) list all relevant statements, (d) delete any repetitive statements, thereby leaving the invariant horizons or meaning units, (e) cluster the meaning units into themes, (f) describe the textural experience by synthesizing meaning units and themes (including verbatim examples), (g) develop structures of the experience through imaginative variation, (h) construct a textural-structural description of the essences and meanings of the experience, (i) repeat steps b through h for each participant in the study, and lastly, (j) synthesize all textural-structural descriptions of the essences and meanings (i.e., step h) of the individual experience's into a universal or composite description.

The presentation of the synthesized analysis (i.e., step i) may be presented in alternative ways. For example, the synthesis may be presented by overall themes and sub themes, by a fictionalised account of the experience that is based in the textural and structural findings or, by utilizing existential themes of lived time, lived space, lived body and lived social experiences (Van Manen, 1997). The above variations may also be altered or combined, depending on the situation.

Discussion of Findings

In this last section, I go over the main points of the study. The main points are contrasted with the literature review and methods employed. I also discuss the relevance of incorporating music during a nature-based leisure event with respect to emotions and attachment to the wilderness through experiences had there. The above was further considered with reference to changing environmental behaviours through emotional attachments to the wilderness. Lastly, I reflect on what has been accomplished and the relevance of it to myself and to the area of nature-based leisure.

Concluding Remarks

Phenomenological methods remain closely grounded in the lived experiences of the phenomenon being studied. Consequently, this phenomenological study described what it is like to experience making music during a nature-based leisure event by utilizing the meanings set forth by those who have shared their experiences. As well, different accounts of the experience were synthesized and presented in a manner that validates the lived experience. Such insights are of value for understanding the potential of music as a trigger activity that enhances the wilderness experience.

Presentation of Data

In this section, the results of five stages of data analysis are presented. In so doing, I examine the individual and universal experience of playing a musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event. The first stage of analysis involves developing lists of unrepeated and non-overlapping statements (invariant meaning units) that are relevant to this study. The invariant meaning units are listed in an order that sequentially represent the experienced phenomenon—as told by the participant. The second stage of analysis involves developing themes, each with a list of supporting meaning units or quotes. The third stage of analysis includes a textural description of the experience that incorporates themes and meaning units to demonstrate 'what' the experience was like. The fourth stage of analysis includes a structural description of the experience that gives an account of the underlying essences and meanings to demonstrate 'how' the experience occurred. The fifth stage of analysis, a composite textural-structural description, describes the meanings and essences of the emotional experience of playing a musical instrument (or singing) during a nature-based leisure event as found applicable across participant experiences. For the sake of clarity and parsimony, only the third, fourth, and fifth stages are presented in the thesis.

In what follows, in no particular order, are the presentations of ten participant accounts. Each account includes a brief introduction and the third and fourth stages of analysis. After all ten participant accounts have been presented, the fifth stage (i.e., the composite textural-structural description) of analysis follows.

Analysis of Allen's Experience

Allen's experience consisted of playing a wooden flute after work (in the evening)—near a reservoir. I interviewed Allen at his country acreage. After a day of talking and hiking through the woods we sat outside by the fire he had started. Although the temperature was approximately –23^0 Celsius, we were warm. We played instruments for a couple of hours and then conducted the interview. Allen seemed at ease with the whole process and played his instrument during parts of the interview. I attained 16 pages of text from the recorded interview and 90 minutes of music.

Textural Description

This textural description describes what the experience was like for Allen. It remains closely linked to how Allen originally described the experience, and therefore, retains numerous examples in his own words. Moreover, themes are introduced in the textural description.

The experience of music during a nature-based leisure event, for Allen, acted as a coping mechanism that gave him comfort while separated from his family because of a job placement. This separation made him "pretty upset." The long hours that Allen worked left some time during the evening when he "would usually go for a walk" with his flute. Allen sought a place where "not many people would go." The area he chose was by a city "reservoir…surrounded by…woods." In this area, he noticed the presence of "deer… coyotes …snowshoe hares and…birds." For Allen this was a refuge where he could "go and just be." Moreover, it was a place where he "didn't feel…too distracted" to face his inner turmoil. Conversely, in the city, he "couldn't seem to bring that feeling up."

To confront his feelings, Allen found that "the biggest thing was to…sit and to calm down and to quiet" himself. For instance, he would "take a big breath and think: alright I am in nature here and gaze out over the water (which was pretty)…and then inspiration would kind of well up…. and…the deeper creative stuff could come out." Upon feeling "peaceful" he would begin to play his flute. Allen wanted to play "something out of" his "own heart." For "the first time…ever" his "flute…described how" he "felt." Allen then played these expressive notes "over and over cause it could describe what" he "felt." The phrasing in Allen's song would remind him of certain objects of his emotion. For example, while playing the "higher notes" he "would see" his "wife's face," which made him feel energized. During the "lower notes" he was reminded of his job and his locality (i.e., away from his family), which made Allen distressed. Confronting the objects of his emotion through playing music "meant everything in the World" to Allen. He found a "peace" that helped to carry him through "the middle of a storm….It allowed the deeper part of me that kept buried under all the pressure to come to life and just kind of open up and come out."

The opportunity to express his emotions "rejuvenated" and "empowered" Allen—making it seem possible for him to "face the next day." The "depth and magnitude that it had during that time…was…really necessary."

> In essence…I found…that that song…really described what my heart wanted to say and what it wanted to profess to everybody and I guess what I wanted to tell my wife and how much I missed her and I could never tell her that in words or nothing but the song seemed to ease it all…and…make it worth while.

The type of instrument and the natural environment that Allen utilized "had a lot to do with" the emotional expression he experienced. For instance, he stated: "It was kind of neat…nature would provide the setting for the song and the song would make the nature experience better….The two fit together so well…it just seems like that's the kind of instrument that should only be played in the woods…. It worked together to bring me to a place of comfort."

Structural Description

This structural description demonstrates how Allen experienced the phenomenon and describes the underlying structure of the phenomenon. Hence, the meanings of certain events and feelings were analyzed and considered in their relation to one another.

The structures that saturate Allen's experience of playing music during a nature-based leisure event created a cathartic episode. This experience was created by his relationship to natural settings, his effort to be in the moment, and his newfound ability to express emotions while playing music.

Allen was living and working away from his family, which caused considerable emotional stress. He needed to find ways to vent or to deal with these emotions. Moreover, he needed to re-create himself in order to proceed with the next day. He found that visiting a natural area in conjunction with playing his flute to be both needed and cathartic.

Allen had always enjoyed spending time in nature; hence, it made sense for him to visit a natural area when needing to feel more at peace. These feelings occurred most easily for Allen in natural areas where he found solitude from others and the city environment. He found such a place near a body of water surrounded by trees. This area allowed him to calm down, to confront built-up emotions, and to experience feelings of "peace" and "purity."

Allen meditated in this area by sitting down, taking deep breaths, and gazing out into his natural surroundings. Nature meditation helped Allen to relax and experience nature more fully. This process allowed him to become "inspired" and have "deeper creative" feelings emerge.

Once inspired by his natural surroundings, Allen proceeded to play his flute. He was not satisfied by playing music that he usually did in nature (i.e., the music of other artists). He needed to vent his emotions and deal with the built up feelings caused by the time spent away from his family. Hence, for the first time, Allen played original music from his "heart." Moreover, he expressed how he was feeling about the objects of his emotions.

The process of being in nature and expressing his emotions through music offered Allen great relief. It was just what he "had been striving for." That is, expressing feelings that he could in "no way....tell anybody." Allen played these notes (i.e., expressing his feelings) "over and over and over" again until he was re-created.

Analysis of Mason's Experience

Mason played the wooden flute in the evening while camping with friends on canoe trip. Mason's description of his experience was obtained through a written account that provided 12 pages of text.

Textural Description

Mason's experience of bringing and playing a musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event occurred "with some friends" during "a week-long canoe camping trip." One evening, the group camped on "a point out about 200 metres wide with water on each side....On one side of the point there was a rock cliff/wall across the lil bay." The chosen site "was quite nice." After a "good meal and...a fun day" Mason "felt content" and "relaxed." The rest of the group felt "cheery." One of the group members asked Mason to play his flute. "In hopes of having them hear" the "flute at its best" he "walked over to the edge of the water about 50 metres away from them and the fire." It was dark. The spot Mason had chosen to play his music comprised of evergreen trees and a rock cliff that offered "a natural echo."

Before commencing his music, Mason "took a few hurried moments to relax...and get into the moment and surroundings." As he proceeded to play his music he remained "focused on natural objects or the feeling... attained from looking out at the darkness and the silhouettes of the trees in the dark." Upon hearing the "echo off the wall," Mason thought the music "would sound better...near their location." While the music was played, Mason started to "sense" his "surroundings with a heightened awareness." This awareness was most evident during short pauses in the music, as he could better "sense a oneness." As the music progressed through time (as well as after the music) Mason was better able to "notice nature fragrances and the mist in the air and the insects sounds," which was accompanied by "a wonderful feeling." The music was played for "about 12 minutes" although he found it "hard to judge the time frame." Upon completion of the music, Mason felt "calm, tranquil and in tune to" his "surroundings." Moreover he felt "good or love in" his "heart towards nature and anything in it—including people."

Mason was concerned with how the others experienced the music and suspected that they would be "ignoring" him "off in the dark woods playing." However, he found his "group of friends sitting quietly…in a somber or reflective manner." He was glad "the others enjoyed" it.

Mason would always play his "flute in a more traditional Native American style." For Mason, playing this type of music seemed to "express emotion." Moreover, the flute seemed "to just fit in the natural environment," whereas, other types of instruments sounded "twangy or noisy."

Structural Description

The structures that permeate Mason's nature music experience evoked positive feelings that were attained through feelings of oneness with nature, Native American style flute music, and a sense of other.

Feelings of oneness with nature were actively sought after. For instance, he would take the time to "quiet" himself prior to playing his music, even though he seemed in a hurry to perform for his friends. Mason would attain feelings of oneness by focusing his attention on natural features. Nature in combination with the music elevated his awareness of the scents in the air, the insect noises, and the evening breeze. Experiencing a oneness and an enhanced awareness made him feel wonderful and close to the objects of nature and his companions.

The Native American style of flute music enhanced Mason's emotions in two ways. First, the flute music allowed him to express his feelings. Second, the sound produced by the flute suited the natural environment, where other instruments sounded out of place. Furthermore, to make the most of the experience Mason found a place where the flute music was powerful—that is, beside water and near a cliff. This strategic location would allow the sound to be heard from different directions as it echoed off the rock cliff and through the trees.

It was clear Mason was affected by the presence of others. For instance, he was careful in choosing a location to play his flute, in part, so that the others would hear the music at its best. Another instance of Mason's attention towards the others was evident in the "hurried" manner he prepared for himself prior to playing the flute. Lastly, Mason was thinking about how the group was responding to the music just prior to his return; and moreover, was "glad" that the others had a good experience.

Analysis of Kiley's Experience

Kiley was leading a youth group on a canoe camping trip. During some free time, around sunset, he played the fife in his canoe. Kiley's description of his experience was obtained through a written account that offered 4 pages of text.

Textural Description

Kiley "was leading a group of children on a weeklong canoe trip." Although he often played his fife (small flute) on canoe trips, he would "never play it at home" or in an urban environment. He found that playing the fife was only appropriate during camping trips and that playing it elsewhere did not offer the "same experience at all."

The best time to play the fife was during "sunsets" and "when the weather was calm." On one such evening, Kiley paddled himself to a "concave granite cliff." While his canoe was left "bobbing in the gentle waves" he "enjoyed playing the fife," and did so "for quite some time." Throughout the time Kiley spent playing music, he "almost entirely improvised" it, but would occasionally "mimic familiar songs." Kiley's fife music echoed "across the lake." He would "often play with his eyes closed, focusing only on the sound" and the meditative, effects that the sound seemed to have. The "scents" of the "coniferous forest, sphagnum moss, and the Canadian Shield lake water" played an "integral" role during this experience, which had him experience feelings that were "soothing and ethereal"

Kiley does not consider himself as "a spiritual person," but "at that moment," he "felt" one of his "strongest connections to the energies and essences of nature." At times he felt like he "could commune with the loons on the lake, or with the greater intangible entity of nature itself." The experience left Kiley feeling "relaxed, at peace," and "in the moment."

Structural Description

The structures that saturate Kiley's experience of playing music during a nature-based leisure event relate to an experience of oneness with nature. For Kiley, the feeling of oneness was a "meditative state," where he felt "relaxed, at peace, in the moment," and connected "to the energies and essences of nature." Oneness was achieved through the aesthetics of the natural environment, improvised music, the meditative sound of music in the natural environment, and a communion with nature.

"The atmospheric scents of [the] coniferous forest, sphagnum moss and Canadian Shield lake water were certainly integral to the experience." Moreover, the natural environment was the only place where Kiley would play his fife—elsewhere, "it is not the same experience at all." Kiley would improvise his playing as he sat in a "bobbing" canoe. He utilized the natural landscape to create the right sound, that is, a granite wall across water to create echoes. Moreover, he played at sunset when there was less wind to carry the sound away. He "really enjoyed" playing in this context and would play "for quite some time." As he became engrossed in his music he would play "with…eyes closed, focusing only on the sound and the meditation that it brought about."

Kiley's self-described experience was "soothing and ethereal." Specifically, the echo placed him into a relaxing and "meditative state." His focus of attention was on the music. The music placed him "in the moment" with his cognitions focused on natural objects and his emotion. At this point, feelings of oneness were both further realized and enhanced through a paranormal communion. "I would feel as if, through the music, I could commune with the loons on the lake, or with the greater intangible entity of nature itself."

Analysis of Fred's Experience

Fred played his wooden flute at sunrise. He was working at a youth camp at the time. I interviewed Fred in a (human made) cave located high up on a riverbank. The sunlight warmed the small cave, but the outside temperature was approximately -16^0 Celsius. We spent some time walking in a natural area, played some music together and then recorded the interview. This interview provided 24 pages of text and 35 minutes of music. Fred seemed, quite relaxed and happy to share his story.

Textural Description

To alleviate a "low period" in his life, Fred sought a natural setting to "be alone." He "wanted to go for a sit" and found a place on "the east side of the island just as the sun was rising." Sitting still (for "half an hour") would help him to attain "a feeling for the flow of nature," which he found comforting. During the "sit," Fred began to notice the "beautiful morning." "The sun just vivid, it was awesome, not many clouds, a little mist coming off the lake....The birds and the chickadees were all around...playing...tweeting and...feeding." Although the surroundings started to make Fred feel a little better, the "happy and flitfull" chickadees also had him "feeling envious" of their apparent "nice easy life."

Fred had not intended to play his flute during this sit; however, he found it in his bag. Still feeling down, he decided to play "just to have something happen." Fred played for about 15 minutes while not "feeling anything." His experience with the new flute was a little discouraging as he strived to learn how to play the instrument. He then took a "little break" from playing. The chickadees "did not leave...they stayed around." Fred was surprised by this and "started to play more...get more into it." Not wanting to "scare them away" or "change anything" he played "mostly the same thing over and over." Still, the chickadees were not leaving and were "accepting" the music that he was "bringing to this" place. He "started to really feel uplifted and good" about "being able to" be there among the chickadees. His envy of the chickadees ceased as he found that he was "helping" to create "beautiful music…and contributing to the overall state of things….The birds were singing their thanksgiving….The environment was influencing" him. "This was good incentive to keep playing."

Fred continued to play for "10 to15 minutes, stop for a bit, go for a little more, basically throughout the whole" hour spent there. He "felt thankful for…the place and to be doing what" he "was doing with the birds." As Fred continued to play his music he began to think about all there was to be "thankful" for. He realized that he had "all this good stuff going for" him. Fred's mood was improved as he "felt like" he "had a lot of things to look forward to, and hey maybe there is more stuff that" he was "forgetting, but…hadn't realized yet."

As Fred and the chickadees were playing songs of "thanksgiving," he was able to express these feelings (i.e., of thanksgiving) through melodies on his flute. "I think what may have made it so special for me was, I had these internal feelings being expressed….And that's what kind of lifted me up a little bit…in terms of like connecting…with nature and music." Joining in the chickadees song of thanksgiving helped him to not "feel like an outsider" anymore, rather, more connected to his "surroundings."

By the time Fred was done playing his music he was "feeling really, really, really good." Although Fred still had issues in his life, he now recognized that "there was a lot of good stuff too, so" he "felt more balanced" and "happier." After Fred left the area, his mood began to "drop," but "definitely didn't go all the way down" to where it was prior to the experience.

Fred was "thankful" for the whole experience.

Structural Description

The structures of Fred's experience of playing music during a nature-based leisure event, centre on how he changed a bad mood through an emotional communion with the chickadees, an experience of musical expression, and a felt connection to nature.

Fred was not able to alter his mood to a large degree until he experienced an emotional communion with the chickadees. However, at first the chickadees only made him envious of their seemingly "happy" demeanor. Upon realizing that the chickadees seemed to accept his music, Fred responded enthusiastically. Fred was now careful not to "scare them away." He found himself "helping" the chickadees "thanksgiving" song by joining in with his flute. Fred found that he was sharing emotions of thanksgiving with the chickadees. The chickadees seemed thankful for their natural surroundings as was Fred. Moreover, Fred was thankful for what he "was doing with the birds." As Fred continued in the thanksgiving song, his consciousness was flooded with more aspects of his life to be thankful for. This seemed to make the song and the shared emotions more intense.

Fred realized that he was able to express his emotions through his music. "What" he "was doing with the birds…started it;" that is, realizing he was able to share and express the thankfulness he felt towards his surroundings. Prior to this time, Fred had experienced frustration with the instrument with respects to making it sound good. What made this experience "special" was being able to vent "these internal feelings" through expressing his emotion in his music.

Fred found that the environment, the chickadees, and him were all connected. For instance, being capable of joining the chickadees in song made him feel like he was "contributing to the overall state of things" as opposed to being an "outsider" or "observer." "The birds were singing their thanksgiving…I was…feeling the same…the environment was influencing me. I don't know if one came before the other necessarily. It's kind of the chicken and the egg question."

Analysis of Steve's Experience

Steve played his guitar after a long day of paddling during a canoe camping trip. Steve's description of his experience was obtained through a written account that provided four pages of text.

Textural Description

Steve found that canoe camping allowed him to attain "relative seclusion" from the "un-natural world." On the first day of "a 5 day canoe trip….in Temagami," Steve and his companions lived moment to moment, as the conditions often demanded their attention. For example, "as the day passed the wind picked up and" they "had to really work to go forward and keep up to Guy….The cloudy skies darkened…and we received the occasional rain shower."

"After a long day of paddling" they arrived at a campsite on an island. "The rain had let up" and they "could feel…the warm moist air." A fire was lit behind a "propped canoe." After some relaxing, they "decided to break out" the "instruments." Steve "pulled out the guitar and gave it a strum." He immediately was struck by the sound that was produced by his natural surroundings. "Wow, this sounds like I'm in some kind of recording studio…. "The sound was amazing….and seemed to just blend in with the ambient sound." Next, Brad's trombone hit notes that "shot out across the lake, bound of some trees and" returned. The effect "seemed to be another trombone player on the other side." The beginner fiddle player (i.e., Guy) also "sounded good."

Steve's senses seemed to awaken after the music was played and he noticed subtleties in his natural surroundings. "It was so quiet around us, the only thing you could hear was a slight breeze through the trees, the dripping of water from the trees and the crackling of the fire…. I can still recall the feel of the wet pine needles and bits of lichen moss sticking to my bare, wet feet as I walked over the wet warm rocks." At one point Steve and Brad "played a beautiful duet of the lamenting St. James Infirmary." Again, the sound seemed to be "just perfect. Awesome….Like the perfect blend of sounds….Sitting, relaxing after a hard physical day, resting and playing music as the clouds seemed to thin out without further threats of rain, I just felt relaxed and happy….Really at peace." He decided to "complete" the experience of "serenity and good feelings of the moment with "a mug of wine" and a pipe smoke.

Structural Description

The structures of Steve's experience of playing music during a nature-based leisure event centred on feelings of awe, peace, and serenity attained through both the unique sound of music in nature and an heightened awareness of his natural environment.

Steve enjoyed the experience of music during canoe camping trips and would "often bring…a musical instrument." On this particular occasion, perhaps due to a combination of the echo effect created by a distant shore and "the warm moist air" that would have affected the sound, the experience was "very memorable." Steve was the first to play. The "strum" of the guitar produced a sound that was "pure", "amazing," and had "recording studio" quality that blended with "ambient sound" of the environment. Steve was surprised with the high quality of this sound, which was beyond what he was used to hearing. Likewise, as the other members of his group took turns playing their instruments, the sound experience continued to surprise and impress Steve. For instance, as the trombone player played, the sound echoed to the extent that it seemed there was another trombone player across the lake. After this, the fiddle was played and also sounded "good to the ears."

Lastly the group played a song together that seemed to further heighten the experience for Steve. A " beautiful" and "lamenting" song called "St. James Infirmary" was played. This song provided an emotional communion between musicians (and perhaps the songwriter) as they joined together to express the emotions of the song through their instruments. The experience, as perceived by Steve, was evident in his descriptions of it. For example, he stated, "it sounded just perfect. Awesome....Like the perfect blend of sounds."

Steve finds that time in "seclusion...from the 'un-natural' world" (e.g., a few day canoe camping trip) brings him "closest to nature." The amount of time that it takes Steve to feel close to nature, in this case, seemed to coincide with when he played music on the trip's first day. Initially, Steve was aware of the natural elements throughout his day of paddling. It would have been almost impossible not to notice the elements of nature that made it difficult to paddle and keep dry. However, once the music was played, Steve's descriptions of the natural environment become less vague and general, that is, towards being poetic and detailed. For instance, Steve describes the sound of the guitar as to "blend in with the ambient sound" of his natural surroundings. He continues,

> it was so quiet around us, the only thing you could hear was a slight breeze through the trees, the dripping of water from the trees and the crackling of the fire….I can still recall the feel of the wet pine needles and bits of lichen moss sticking to my bare, wet feet as I walked over the wet warm rocks.

Heightened awareness and feelings of being calm or relaxed worked together to bring Steve a feeling of contentment.

> Playing music as the clouds seemed to thin out without further threats of rain, I just felt relaxed and happy….Really at peace….The only thing left to do was lite up my pipe and have a mug of wine to complete the serenity and good feelings of the moment.

Analysis of Ted's Experience

Ted played his guitar during a ten-day solo event that occurred while working as a caretaker for a remote Outward Bound camp. Ted's description of his experience was obtained through a written account (four pages of text).

Textural Description

Ted was the "caretaker" of the Black Sturgeon Lake Outward Bound camp during the off-season. "It was located 66 km north of Lake Superior on the Black Sturgeon logging road." His duties included "feeding and exercising the [sled] dogs"—all 30 of them. Ted took advantage of his solitude and remoteness and commenced a "10 day solo stint." As part of his solo experience, he would practice his guitar "in the evenings" as well as continue caring for the dogs.

During his solo Ted began feeling sorry for the dogs and found it "hard to imagine what a dog [might] think about day after day living on the end of a chain in such a remote place with sometimes little stimulation" and never having "much new happen to them." Hence, as caretaker he believed "entertaining or keeping the dogs happy" was "part of the job."

One evening he "decided to take the guitar out to the dog yard." "The evening was cool and to yard had its distinctive smell of dog." As Ted "entered the yard the dogs began barking and going wild as they always do when someone comes into the yard." Ted then sat upon a doghouse to play. "Dogs still barking," he "was apprehensive about how they would react," due to the fact that if "the guitar would…scare them" he "would not have anyone else to play" for. Moreover, he hoped that his "playing" would also be beneficial for the chained dogs in the form of "something new to…ponder." He "began to strum out some chords and they immediately became quiet and 30 sets of eyes became focused on" him. "Some whined and ducked into their houses" to "watch from inside….Some were genuinely interested…and watched intently." Ted was "relieved" to find that the dogs not only seemed to accept the music, but were interested in it too.

As Ted played he became more aware of his surrounding and found the "scenery of…Black Sturgeon Lake…beautiful." Ted also began to feel that he was in an area that was "very remote" with…no one else for miles in any direction."

Overall, Ted found the experience to be gratifying. "Playing to that view" and to those "dogs was very uplifting."

Structural Description

The structures of Ted's experience of playing music during a nature-based leisure event involve emotional communion attained through sharing his music with the sled dogs. The music also seemed to awaken him to the beauty of the surroundings that he was playing in, which had him sense the solitude.

After practicing music on every evening of his solo experience, Ted, wanted to share his music with others. However, being on a solo experience meant that he only had the chained sled dogs to play for. Ted was relieved that his audience was interested in what he played. For the first time during his solo experience he was able to share his music along with the emotion that he expressed in it. Moreover, both Ted and the dogs were experiencing their own type of solitude (i.e., the dogs being chained most of the time), which made it more meaningful for Ted.

While playing music, Ted began to notice and feel the aesthetics of his surroundings more. He became more aware of the "scenery" surrounding him, stating that it was "beautiful." He had feelings of being in a "very remote" place. Acknowledging the solitude that the dogs had to live with "on the end of a chain in such a remote place with sometimes little stimulation," he hoped to offer something meaningful and unique to them.

Analysis of Shannon's Experience

Shannon sang her music during a remote backpacking trip. Shannon's description of her experience was obtained through a written account that provided three pages of text.

Textural Description

Shannon along with a small group of others was hiking in "Auyuittuq[9] National Park on Baffin Island." Hiking in a natural area and singing were somewhat inseparable for her. For instance, she stated, "throughout the…hike I sang almost continually (either out-loud or in my head)." Her "overwhelming urge to sing" would occur as she looked upon natural vistas. As she gazed upon these vistas a "feeling of joy would well up inside."

Expressing these feelings in rhythmic song also "helped to motivate" her as she hiked. At one point during her hike/song, the group came across a "meadow" where "the grass was…green and beautiful." They decided to explore the area and "headed up the hill." She noticed that "the air was quite cool, but the sun was warm….The air smelled fresh and clean." Upon noticing "a large rock covered by lichen," Shannon "decided to lay down and sing." There was "a glacier on my left with a pool of water at it's [sic] base." As she lay there and sang, the affect that her surroundings had on her intensified. She experienced a "beautiful feeling" and noticed the sun "warming" her "wool sweater and the coolness of the rock." This moment of heightened awareness also affected her emotionally: "the beauty was overwhelming at points."

Structural Description

The structures of Shannon's experience of singing during a nature-based leisure event relates to her emotion, which was strongly influenced by the natural environment and expressed through song. Moreover, as Shannon sang she attained a heightened awareness that further intensified her emotion. Lastly, singing rhythmically for Shannon acted as a motivation for her to continue to backpack.

The vistas of the natural landscape also affected Shannon's emotions. This is evident in her statement: a "feeling of joy would well up inside of me as I watched the sun light move along the hills." Moreover, Shannon used positive terms as she described her surroundings that suggest that she had good feelings toward these objects. For example, as she described natural objects she used the following terms and phrases: "alive," "so green and beautiful," "warm," "warming," "cool," "fresh," "clean," "overwhelming," and "beauty."

Shannon expressed her emotion in song. For instance, she stated, "As the sun would light up the barren hills I would have this overwhelming urge to sing." The ability for Shannon to express her emotions created a joyful experience as she hiked. She would sing continually either out loud or "in her head." The act of singing along with the view of the natural landscape seemed to heighten her awareness of both the natural surroundings and internal feelings. This phenomenon becomes most evident when she stopped to lie down and sing in a meadow. The act of stopping allowed her to notice the surroundings in greater detail than when hiking. The natural objects that then entered her

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[9] Translated, Auyuittuq means the land that never melts.

consciousness were described with detail. Moreover, she used varied senses (e.g., touch and olfactory) to experience her environment. This enhanced awareness of her surroundings intensified her emotion. For instance, she stated the "beauty was overwhelming at points."

Backpacking is a strenuous activity that requires motivation to press on to a destination. To cope with this kind of demand, Shannon found that she could utilize the rhythmic aspects of song to motivate her as she backpacked. In all, Shannon seemed able to intensify her emotions allowing her to more fully experience the environment as well as motivate her in it.

Analysis of Robin's Experience

Robin played the fiddle by himself during a camping trip with friends. Robin's description of his experience was obtained through a written account that provided six pages of text.

Textural Description

Robin was on day two of a kayak trip with friends. They "had only seen one other group all day and that had been many hours before." The weather had been "fair and mostly calm, with a slight breeze." It was "late afternoon" when they had the campsite set-up. Afterwards, Robin found an area "upon a rock overlooking the water" where he would be alone. Robin "felt very peaceful there."

It was at this point that Robin commenced his music. Not wanting to impose his music on other campers, he "felt insecure that others might hear." Robin played from sheet music that made him "lose some…awareness of the sounds around" him. Although he was learning how to play his instrument "where…violin skills lacked the sounds of nature more than made up for it."

Robin's awareness of his surroundings came alive when the music "stopped….It is then that I would watch the water rippling against the rocks, listening to the birds, and watching a squirrel…. I do not know if the birds had always been there or came over to inspect the noise coming from the piece of wood [fiddle] I was holding." As Robin became more aware of his surroundings he also noticed that his emotion had changed to "a great feeling." The enhanced awareness and emotion brought Robin into the moment where "no other thoughts other than the sound of the light breeze and the calls and actions of the birds" were noticed. While in this state, Robin found himself involved in his surrounding by listening intently "to the birds…to locate them….They would be quite close, up in an evergreen." Robin found that there was "something very calming to the soul to watch the birds flying in and out of the tree's branches." Referring to nature's music (i.e., bird song, trees in the wind, and water running over rocks) in his surroundings, he realized that there are "no better sounds than that which are heard in nature."

After the music nature experience Robin felt "lucky" to have been able to "accompany" the birds.

Structural Description

The structures of Robin's experience of playing music during a nature-based leisure event that had him immersed in his natural surroundings occurred from an experience of elevated awareness, intensified emotion, and a focus of attention on his music.

Robin became fully immersed in his natural surrounding, that is, he was not concentrating on any object either outside of the moment or beyond his sensory reaches. This idea is expressed in Robin's statement that: "At this time I had no other thoughts other than the sound of the light breeze and the calls and actions of the birds." Robin makes further reference to his surroundings through descriptions of the behaviour of the birds around him. He found observing his surroundings in this way "very calming."

Robin's awareness of his surroundings throughout the day was limited. For instance, he did "not recall the weather exactly" and did not notice or remember if there were birds present before or during the fiddle playing. "What I do remember is what happened when I stopped playing the fiddle….It is then that I would watch the water rippling against the rocks, listening to the birds, and watching a squirrel." Robin's awareness was directed to his surroundings, all natural objects except for his instrument.

Coinciding with Robin's experience of elevated awareness was an enhanced emotional response. He clearly specified his changing emotion throughout the experience. Prior to playing the music, he "felt very peaceful" as he looked down upon the water from the rock he sat on. As the music commenced, he felt "insecure" with respect to worry about others hearing him. Shortly after, as the music was being played, he felt comfortable again. Upon pausing his playing, he felt "a great feeling" come over him. After this, he felt "something very calming to the soul" as he observed the natural world. Robin appreciated the sounds of nature and felt "lucky" that he was there to experience it.

Robin's concentration on playing music made him somewhat unable to focus any of his attention on his surroundings. For instance, he stated "by reading notes it takes more concentration…and…I lose…awareness of the sounds around me….What I do remember is what happened when I stopped"—a great feeling." At this point, an awareness of his surroundings was greatly enhanced. From this, Robin felt an appreciation for his surroundings and the experience he had there.

Analysis of Doug's Experience

Doug played his guitar by a campfire while camping with his family. Doug's description of his experience was obtained through a written account that provided three pages of text.

Textural Description

In an attempt to "slow down" a hurried lifestyle in the "hectic hi-tech market" Doug found escape in a secluded section of a campground at Bon Echo Provincial Park. This escape allowed him to "enjoy" both his family's "company and the surrounding hardwood forest." Once the evening campfire turned to coals and the "kids" were "in the tent listening," Doug decided to play his guitar and harmonica. With "the orange embers reflecting off the sheen of the guitar" and his partner sitting nearby with a "cup of herbal tea," he played a "very slow rhythm with a few cord changes." The music placed Doug into the moment: "it felt like time had stopped." The music then blended into the natural surroundings as it "touched the light wind above us, where the stars were looking down through the treetops." As Doug played, his "thoughts were left to run their own way…free from association." After he finished playing his guitar and harmonica, Doug felt "great." Appreciating this experience, Doug began to "wonder how…to spend more time in the wilderness…to reconnect…more?" Moreover, out of concern for "generations to come," he wondered "how" he could "ensure" that natural places like Bon Echo would be preserved.

Structural Description

The positive experience that Doug had in the Park made him wonder how he and his family could participate in such activities more often. Moreover, he had become concerned for the state of natural areas and wanted to "ensure" future generations would have access to the same type of experience. His thoughts of appreciation/concern were triggered by playing his guitar and harmonica. In playing, Doug noticed the sound seemed to blend in with the natural surroundings. At this point, "time stood still," and he perceived his surroundings in a new way; that is, intensified as revealed by the music. The affective objects of his environment made him think: "sitting here is great."

Analysis of Wendy's Experience

Wendy was hiking in the Rocky Mountains with a group that sang during their lunch break. Wendy's description of her experience was obtained through an interview that provided 11 pages of text and two minutes of music.

Textural Description

Playing music during a nature-based leisure outing, for Wendy was a "magical, spiritual" experience. Wendy along with ten others was hiking to a lookout in the

Rockies. The hiking was strenuous and they "worked hard to get there." At breaks along the way they would "sing this beautiful song" entitled "Dona Nobis Pacem." They were all "very very musical people" who found "joy" in singing.

At lunch they stopped at a "magnificent spot….Below, were…lakes and across was Wonder Pass and…to the west was Mt. Assiniboine…and to the east was another…rugged mountain." The aesthetics of the area were "wonderful."

To make their "day extra special" they "gathered into a semi-circle….to sing." The song again was Dona Nobis Pacem, which was sung in "three or four…rounds." This song was enjoyable to sing, in part, because it "breaks into beautiful beautiful harmonies."

Initially, Wendy "focused on the music…getting the timing right….But then…something took over." At some point in the song a "spiritual" dimension became central to Wendy's experience. This dimension was described as an "absolute beauty….a peace….something special….The beauty…of our human voices working together, and the magic of this place just made a something more than the… parts…. It was like worshiping the Creator without all the implements of buildings…man-made things." By the end of the song they "were all crying."

After the song (and for the rest of the day), the natural surroundings assumed a mystical dimension, that is, "they had that special, umm, magical spiritual quality, as if they came to life or something….The mountains, the peace, the air, everything had a magical spiritual quality."

Moreover, Wendy had this "magical feeling inside" of her that "was so uplifting, one of the top maybe five experiences of my life."

Structural Description

The structures that saturate Wendy's experience of singing during nature-based leisure demonstrate a profound change in her emotion that affected the way she perceived her natural surroundings for the rest of the day. This change occurred through a combination of the affective qualities of the natural environment and a focus of attention on the mechanics of singing, and was followed by a feeling/awareness that her natural surrounding were "alive."

Throughout the day and particularly at lunch break, Wendy had the opportunity to appreciate the natural landscape. The aesthetics of natural surroundings were described by terms and phrases such as "wonderful, magnificent, reverent, awe inspiring, and rugged." It is clear by these descriptors that she was affected emotionally by the natural objects that she focused on. Her perception of these natural objects was later changed through the experience of singing. As Wendy focused her attention on the mechanics of singing during "a three part harmony," her conscious thoughts were in the present moment and on the task at hand. Once she and her group were comfortable with the "mechanical" aspects of creating the harmony, her mind did not focus only on the music. Instead, she also was focusing on the objects around her. In this case, these objects were the natural features of the vista in front of their "semi-circle." Hence, while still in the moment she was viewing "beautiful" natural landscapes. These natural objects also acted on her emotions and the music seemed to intensify her emotional response. At this point, Wendy felt an "uplifting" feeling—one of "peace." She felt like she was "worshipping the Creator" in a pure way (i.e., without any "manmade" objects interfering). After the music stopped, this emotional response remained with her (i.e., it affected her long-term mood). Moreover, her perception of the surroundings took on a new meaning. The natural objects were now alive in a "magical spiritual" way in that she felt an enhanced awareness of the natural objects within her environment.

Composite Textural-Structural Description

This final stage of my data presentation examines the meanings and essences of playing a musical instrument (or singing) during a nature-based leisure event. To do so, I have synthesized meaning units, themes, and the textural and structural descriptions of each participant into universal meanings or essences of the experience (i.e., as found applicable across participant experiences). Hence, in what follows, there are five topic areas that represent the findings in this study:

1. Escape and change as motivation for visits to natural settings.
2. Music as a means to focus sensory attention.
3. The combined effect of playing music and being in nature: something more than the composite parts.
4. Music as a way of connecting to nature.
5. Contentment and appreciation.

Escape and Change as Motivation for Visits to Natural Settings

There are many reasons why people seek the experience of a natural setting. Participants' reasons included diverse forms of escape and change. Generally, participants desired to escape from other people, that is, to find solitude for themselves or their group. For instance, one participant stated: "we purposely…camp in an area where it is difficult to hear or see other campers." Participants' reasons for finding this solitude included a desire to "be alone in…misery;" to "slow down;" to "just be;" to conceal the sound of their music; to "calm down;" to spend time with family; and to enjoy the "wonderful scenery." Similar to experiencing an escape is experiencing a change, for instance, the change from being "distracted" in the "hectic hi-tech market place" to feeling "peace" in sensing the "atmospheric scents of the coniferous forest, sphagnum moss and the Canadian Shield."

Without exception, the escape/change to a natural setting affected participants' moods and thoughts. This is evident from the terms and phrases that were used to describe both place and emotion. Some terms and phrases that were used included: "very peaceful," "enjoy," "calm me down," "magnificent," "wonderful scenery," "feeling of joy would well up," and "integral to the experience." Moreover, many participants described a feeling of sensing-the-moment.

Sensing the moment.

Sensing the moment, at times, is a necessary part of the nature experience. At other times, it is merely a desirable state. For Steve, Robin, Shannon, and others who were on longer trips, paying close attention to the weather (and other aspects of the natural environment) often demanded they focused on the moment for safety reasons. One benefit of sensing the moment is that a person may "get a feeling for the flow of nature" or be "a little more connected to" the "surroundings." To achieve this state, some participants engaged in meditation. Meditation methods included "sitting," "relaxing," calming and slowing "down," focusing on nature, and breathing deeply. Interestingly, when music was played, all participants experienced intensified levels of sensing of the moment.

Music as a Means to Focus Sensory Attention

A central aspect to the experience of playing music in a natural setting is linked to where one focuses his/her attention. Although this focus changes, three foci of attention stand out: The act of playing music, on emotion, and on the aesthetics of the natural surroundings.

Focussed on playing music.

The act of playing music leads one to be "focused on the music itself." The reason for this focusing varies. For instance, several participants reported being preoccupied with the technique of "getting the timing right," or "focusing only on the sound." Another common reason for focusing attention on the music was that it sounded "amazing" in the natural surroundings. For instance, one participant wrote: "I remember playing often with my eyes closed, focusing only on the sound and the meditation that it brought about," which felt "soothing and ethereal." Other participants described the sound of music in a natural setting as being "like a recording studio….blending in with the ambient sound," an experience that was "overwhelming" and "beautiful." A few participants actively sought out places in nature where the sound of their music would be "at its best." For example, places to play were chosen based on the ability of the sound waves to travel across water to a distant "shore," "rock cliff," or "granite wall" before echoing back. The time of day was also deemed relevant, as one participant preferred to play "when the weather was calm, especially around sunset" so the wind would not distort the sound.

Similar to finding the right location to play the instrument, a few participants found that "the instrument had a lot to do with it;" that is, creating a powerful experience. For example, Allen (i.e., a wooden flute player) stated, "It just seems like that's the kind of instrument that should only be played in the woods;" Wendy found that singing created beautiful harmonies; Mason commented that the flute "seems to just fit in the natural environment;" and Kiley would only play his fife in nature because "it was not the same experience at all" to play "at home."

Focussed on emotion.

Playing music was a cathartic experience (i.e., it vented pent-up emotion) for a few participants. Others found that they were able to express their emotion through playing. Allen found that playing music had the power to release pent-up emotions at a time when he was unable to "tell anybody…what" he "was feeling." He was able to vent "internal feelings" of sadness and separation. Venting pent-up emotions allows "the deeper part…kept buried under all the pressure to come to life and…come out." For instance, Fred, feeling down on his luck, found that playing music changed his mood. As he played, he realized the many things he had to be "thankful" for and appreciative of. This cathartic experience occurred as they expressed their emotions through playing music.

Expressing emotion through playing music occurs when one's focus of attention extends beyond the technical aspects of playing a song, that is, "after the mechanical parts" are taken care of, the music can originate "from the heart." Emotional expression is similar to a cathartic experience but with less urgency. In other words, individuals are expressing emotion as they feel them as opposed to venting pent-up emotions. For example, Mason stated the following: "As I began to play I just focused on natural objects or the feeling I attained from looking out at the darkness and the silhouettes of the trees in the dark." Likewise, Shannon found that as "the sun would light up the barren hills" she "would have this overwhelming urge to sing." These last two examples also demonstrate a focus of attention upon the natural surroundings.

Focussed on the natural surroundings.

Common among participants was a shift to or an intensified focus of attention on the natural surroundings as a result of playing music. For some, the shift actually started during a nature meditation, just prior to playing music. Feelings such as a sense of "peace" would be experienced as they viewed their natural surroundings. These feelings were intensified when the music started. Likewise, as the music was played, several shifted their focus from the music to the natural environment. Others experienced a noticeable shift in their focus either after or during pauses in the music. This increased focus upon the natural environment was a pivotal point to the experience. While focussing on the natural environment (i.e., either during or after playing the music), their emotions were suddenly and noticeably altered.

The Combined Effect of Playing Music and Being in a Natural Area: "Something More Than the Composite Parts."

There is interplay between focusing on playing music and focusing on the natural surroundings, which creates "something more than the composite parts"—the two intensify one another. This combined effect can occur swiftly and noticeably. For instance, some of the many descriptions of this effect were as follows: (a) "It just took on an extra dimension of absolute, absolute beauty….something special…had happened—almost a peace;" (b) "It felt like time had stopped;" (c) "What I do remember is what happened when it (playing music) stopped….A great feeling;" (d) "I am not what you would call, in the traditional sense, a spiritual person, but it was at that moment when I felt one of my strongest connections to the energies and essences of nature;" (e) "I think what may have made it so special for me was that…internal feelings being expressed also matched…how the environment was influencing what I was expressing;" (f) "It was kind of neat…nature would provide the setting for the song and the song would make the nature experience better." One participant played his music in intervals (viewing nature during the pauses) and felt a "gradual" shift from feeling depressed to "feeling really, really, really good."

A few others described this moment through vivid descriptions of the landscape and of their emotion, both of which seemed to be intensified at the point of playing the music (or just after) and enjoying the natural environment. For instance, one participant became absorbed in viewing a distant glacier, clouds in the sky, and the flora surrounding her. Moreover, she recalled how rock that she laid on felt and how her emotions swelled up inside her as she experienced these objects. The combined effect of playing music and being in a natural surrounding enhanced their awareness and emotion.

Music as a Way of Connecting to Nature

The effect of playing music in a natural setting fosters feelings of connection. Such feelings ranged from being "peaceful" and aware of the surroundings to having the people in the group "crying" tears of joy as a result of the "magical-spiritual" experience that profoundly increased an awareness of nature for the rest of the day. Moreover, a few participants also felt that they were directly involved in a communication with certain aspects of nature.

Feeling connected with the natural surroundings also offers an enhanced awareness of the surroundings. For instance, sensations may be awakened, such as "the feel of wet pine needles and bits of lichen" under foot. Feeling connected can mean having "no other thoughts other than the light breeze and the calls and actions of the birds" that occupy the senses for that moment. Feeling connected to nature can be a moment when "time" has "stopped," leaving "thoughts…free from association." It can be the cheerful motivation behind a singing backpacker who almost continually is absorbed in her surroundings. It can be about feeling "uplifted" in one's surroundings and feeling "good" will or "love" towards "other" people and species.

Feeling connected with nature can also include being in touch with "the chickadees," "the loons," " the sled dogs," or a greater force. For instance, a few participants had special interactions with birds. Fred joined in a thanksgiving song with the chickadees and felt that the chickadees "accepted" his input, which made him feel "connected to" his "surroundings." Likewise, Kiley felt as though he had "communicated" with the distant loons from his canoe. Ted stated that "the scenery…was beautiful and playing to that view and the dogs was very uplifting. " Moreover, other references were made to being in touch with the "greater intangible entity" and "the Creator," which caused more profound emotional responses.

Contentment and Appreciation

Following a sense of connection to nature are feelings of contentment and appreciation. One participant wrote: "The only thing left to do was lite [sic] up my pipe and have a mug of wine to complete the serenity and good feelings of the moment." Another stated, "We really need to reconnect with the wilderness more....How do we ensure it will be around for generations to come?" Participants also felt "thankful," "lucky," "rejuvenated, empowered," and "really at peace." One participant stated: "It was just so beautiful and it will remain as one of the top maybe five experiences of my life."

In conclusion, my presentation of data section began with a brief description of my data analysis procedures. Next, for each participant, I presented both textural and structural descriptions of the experience that incorporated verbatim examples and themes. I then presented a composite textural-structural description as found applicable across participants' experiences. This description included five topic areas that progressed sequentially through the experience of playing a musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event. The first topic area discussed escape and change as motivations for visiting a natural area and found that emotions were altered from an experience of "sensing the moment," which was intensified as the music was played. In the second topic area, I outlined how music focused participants' attention upon the music, upon an emotion, or upon the natural surroundings. The third topic area included a discussion on the combined effect of playing music and being in a natural area, which led to the fourth topic area, music as a way to connect with nature. The experience of connecting to nature was described. The final topic area offered examples of how the participants demonstrated their contentment and appreciation of the experience and natural environment.

Summary, Implications, and Conclusions

In this last section of my thesis, I first briefly summarize the study up to this point. I next consider the implications of this study by distinguishing my findings from those discussed in my review of the literature, followed by a critique of my methods and findings. Lastly, I consider the outcomes of this study and future research directions.

Summary

In the introduction, I outlined how I became interested in nature-based leisure activities, the playing of music, how my own experiences led to me to become emotionally connected to natural places, and how music contributed to this connection. I focused on the environmental issues facing us today and the relative lack of action taken by citizens and governments. I examined the creation of pro-environmental behaviours through positive nature-based experiences that create emotional attachments to nature. I discussed how both a natural setting and music affect emotion and, together, may create emotional attachments to natural areas. This led me to my research question: What is the emotional experience of a nature-based leisure event that incorporates playing live music?

The literature review noted that no work seems to have been done focussing on my research question, but that some studies have focused on related topics. The areas examined were emotion, music and emotion, and nature and emotion. First, I discussed how emotion has been studied by various disciplines including biology and cognitive science, and defined the terms commonly used (i.e., affect, mood, emotion, and feeling). Then I focused on the experience of an emotion (i.e., cognitive perspective), as well as the structure of an emotion, the object of emotion, and the management of emotion were examined. Second, music and emotion were discussed and some theories of how people experience emotion during music were outlined. I also examined how the intentional object of emotion influences an emotion. Studies finding music to be an intensifier and determiner of emotions experienced during multiple focuses of attention were considered (e.g., looking at art while listening to music). Lastly, I focused on nature and emotion—finding little literature on the topic. I outlined how people experience nature over time and its dynamic aspects as related to emotion. I stated that the objects focused on in a natural environment were central to the affective response. Moreover, I detailed studies that considered objects in the natural environment as a whole, that is, the complexity of a place. I also outlined the descriptors of affective qualities of place. The descriptors were presented along the dimensions of pleasantness and arousal as expressed by people evaluating the affective aspects of a natural environment.

In my methods section, I stated that studies in emotionality should be included a part of all human disciplines, and the phenomenological method was particularly suitable to studies involving the experience of emotion. I first examined phenomenological research methods by contrasting them with quantitative ones. I then discussed four general processes of phenomenological methods: epoche, reduction, imaginative variation, and synthesis. Next, I outlined my data collection process, describing my interview or journal entry process, which had participants answer the question: "Please tell me about an experience that you have had in which you brought and played a musical instrument (including singing) during a nature outing. Lastly, I detailed how the data were analyzed and presented."

In my presentation of the data section, I exposed the meaning units, themes, textures, and structures of my findings for each participant, followed by a composite textural-structural description that synthesized the individual accounts. The synthesized description was divided into five topic areas in an order that led through the experience of playing a musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event. These areas included escape and change as a motivation for visits to natural settings; music as a means to focus sensory attention; the combined effect of playing music and being in a natural setting: something more than the composite parts; music as a way of connecting to nature; and contentment and appreciation. Moreover, two topic areas were subdivided. For instance, the section entitled "escape and change as a motivation for visits to natural settings" had a subsection on sensing the moment. As well, "music as a means to focus sensory attention" was divided into three focus areas: being focused on playing music; being focused on emotion; and being focused on the natural surroundings.

Implications

In this section, I explore the implications of my findings in terms of how they relate to past studies as outlined in my review of the literature, and also reflect upon the methodological approach used for this study. I then go on to describe some other limitations of my research, practical implications of my study, as well as future research directions that should be considered.

Revisiting My Review of the Literature

At this point in my study (having analyzed my data) I will consider the findings as they relate to the topics discussed in my review of the literature. Although there were no studies similar to my own, I relate my findings to some of the ideas presented in past research.

Mood or emotion?

Parkinson et al. (1996) contrasted emotion with mood, as presented in Table 1 in my review of the literature. The distinctions between the two terms were made evident through consideration of duration, time pattern, intensity, causation, function, and directedness. When analysed in terms of these categories, my findings suggest that playing music in a natural environment affects emotion. In what follows, I will consider Parkinson et al.'s categories in terms of my findings. However, because my study considered only a short duration of time in the participants' lives, there was little evidence to suggest that moods (longer in duration) were affected, albeit they may have been in a few cases.

Parkinson et al.'s (1996) second and third distinctions of emotion from mood were related to time pattern (i.e., rapid onset, episodic, phasic) and intensity (i.e., relatively strong). My findings demonstrated that participants' emotions were affected in this way during the time that the music as played (or right after) while viewing the natural surroundings. For instance, one participant states, "It was at that moment when I felt one of my strongest connections to the energies and essences of nature." Another writes, "What I do remember is what happened when it stopped (the music)…. A great feeling."

Another stated, "It just took on an extra dimension of absolute, absolute beauty." Other terms used were "special" and "awesome;" and some of the phrases included "absolute beauty," "time had stopped," and a "great feeling."

Parkinson et al.'s (1996) fourth and fifth categories were causation and directedness, emotion being affected "by a specific event" and by a "specific object" (causation and directedness, respectively; p. 8). The causation from a specific event in this study was playing music and viewing natural surroundings. Similar to Parkinson et al.'s fifth categories (i.e., directedness) is the music listener's (player's) intentional object of emotion, which highly influences her/his type of emotional response (Davies, 1994; Kivy, 1999; Levinson, 1990). Directedness on specific objects of emotion was demonstrated through three main focuses of sensory attention: a focus on playing music, a focus on emotion, and a focus on the natural environment. Emotions were altered by the combined effect of these objects. For instance, the focus of attention on the music seemed to bring participants to "the moment." The focus of attention on emotion occurred when participants either (or in combination) expressed their emotions through music, vented their emotions through music, or noticed their emotions when or after the music was played. The most evident focus on the natural surroundings occurred either during or right after the music.

Although Parkinson et al. (1996) stated that an emotion is the result of a directedness towards a single object, the combination of objects (i.e., music, nature, and emotion) may still be considered as being adequately focussed (or directed) when contrasted with being "unfocussed" (p. 8) on specific objects, which is believed to be the directedness of a mood. In other words, attention (i.e., on music, emotion, and natural surroundings) was indeed focussed and specific to a limited number of objects. Conversely, a mood is created over a longer period of time with numerous objects being focussed on, each to a lesser degree.

The cathartic experience—changing a bad mood.

This study was not designed to measure changes in mood; however, a few participants described a cathartic episode. A cathartic experience is closely related to the experience of changing a bad mood. For instance, a cathartic episode involves the release of pent-up emotion; and generally, an emotion that is persistent or pent-up over time is referred to as a mood. Hence, a cathartic experience is similar to an episodic venting of a bad mood.

In my review of the literature, I included Thayer's (1996) definition of a bad mood; described as a person having a low level of energy and a high level of tension. Altering a bad mood (i.e., to a good mood) then requires an increase in energy level and a reduction in tension level (Thayer). My findings demonstrate some support for Thayer's reasoning. For instance, Allen was "pretty upset" about being separated from his family as a result of a distant job placement—he experienced a build up of "pressure." To alter this pent-up pressure, he tried to "calm down" and feel at "peace." After playing music and experiencing nature he felt "rejuvenated" and "empowered." This example shows that Allen felt a reduction in tension (e.g., feeling peaceful instead of upset) and an elevation in energy (i.e., feeling rejuvenated and empowered). Likewise, Fred's cathartic experience changed his feelings of being "miserable" to being "happier" and "uplifted," demonstrating both a decrease in tension and an elevation in energy. Moreover, Allen and Fred overcame their bad moods through music and nature in combination, whereas Thayer found that music and nature were each a powerful influence for changing a bad mood.

The structure of an emotion.

In my review of the literature, I utilized Russell and Snodgrass's (1987) circumplex (Figure 4), which shows the structure of an emotion along the dimensions of pleasantness and arousal. Descriptive terms related to emotion were attained from the appraisal of natural environments and located on the circumplex. In Figure 5, I have located my participants on this circumplex with respect to how they experienced playing music during a nature-based leisure event. To do so, I considered the descriptions used by the participants at the point when their emotions were most noticeably altered. Each participant's name has been placed on the circumplex with verbatim examples in brackets. The position of each participant on the circumplex is only a rough estimation, as my study was not designed to measure the dimensions of pleasure and arousal.

One drawback of attempting to do this is that my participants did not always use the same terms that Russell and Snodgrass used; moreover, I am using the model out of the original context in which it was developed. That being stated, my estimations of the structural makeup of the participants' emotions offer a good overview of the structure of their emotional responses.

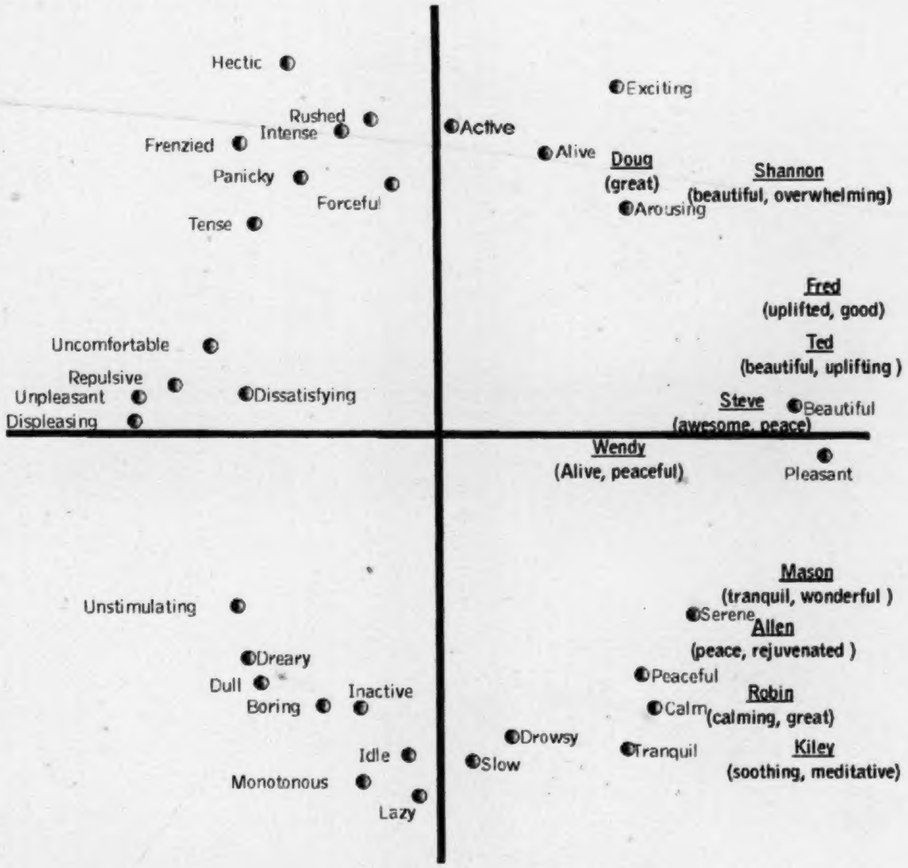
Hectic
Exciting
Rushed
Intense
Active
Frenzied
Alive
Doug
(great)
Shannon
(beautiful, overwhelming)
Panicky
Forceful
Arousing
Tense
Fred
(uplifted, good)
Uncomfortable
Ted
(beautiful, uplifting)
Repulsive
Unpleasant
Dissatisfying
Steve
Beautiful
(awesome, peace)
Displeasing
Wendy
(Alive, peaceful)
Pleasant
Mason
(tranquil, wonderful)
Unstimulating
Serene
Allen
(peace, rejuvenated)
Dreary
Peaceful
Dull
Inactive
Robin
Boring
Calm
(calming, great)
Drowsy
Tranquil
Kiley
Idle
Slow
(soothing, meditative)
Monotonous
Lazy

Figure 5. Participants' located on the circumplex of affect.

Note. Names are underlined with verbatim examples in brackets. Adapted from "Emotion and the environment" (p. 248) by J.A. Russell and J. Snodgrass, 1987, in D. Stokols & I. Altman (Eds.), Handbook of environmental psychology, Toronto: John Wiley & Sons.

In consideration of Figure 5, it is interesting that all the participants experienced high levels of "pleasantness" but very diverse levels of "arousal." The high levels of pleasantness can be justified in that all the participants found the experience to be positive and pleasing. However, the diverse levels of arousal are more difficult to explain. In my data analysis, I found little evidence to suggest that the participants experienced similar levels of arousal or arousals of such a nature that can be explained on Russell and Snodgrass' (1987) circumplex.

As previously stated, some participants found that focussing on nature had calming and peaceful effects (low on the arousal dimension), whereas others felt joyful and magnificent (high on the arousal dimension). However, playing music intensified these feelings, and the music and natural surroundings seemed to intensify one other as the experience progressed. This effect seemed to instil feelings of connection (to diverse degrees) with the natural surroundings.

Feelings of connection to the wilderness were found to be both high and low in terms of levels of arousal (i.e., at the same time). For instance, Wendy used terms like "alive" and "peaceful" to describe her feelings. Others also described feelings that included different levels of arousal on the circumplex. This suggests that the dimension of arousal may not be applicable to the emotions experienced by these participants. That is, the structure of their experienced emotions did not lie appropriately along the dimension of arousal. This is evident in my placement of the participants along the vertical dimension of arousal, where I often located them between the two extremes (of arousal) they described.

Hence, Russell and Snodgrass' (1987) circumplex, which identifies the terms that people use to appraise the affective aspects of a natural environment, did not exactly represent the structure of emotion found in this study. Although my study did not specifically measure the affective terms experienced from the environment along dimensions of pleasure and arousal, it did provide adequate descriptions of emotion that suggest that the structure of their emotions did not lie along the dimension of arousal. One possible reason for the discrepancy is that the participants in my study were not appraising a natural environment (i.e., stating how they think it would make them feel); rather, they were describing how it actually was experienced in their own words (i.e., not led through predetermined measures). Moreover, terms on the circumplex such as "tranquil" and "beautiful," or in Wendy's case "alive" and "peaceful," are located at very different locations on the dimension of arousal; implying that, one cannot feel tranquil and beautiful or alive and peaceful at the same time.

The benefits of playing music.

In my review of the literature, I outlined eight benefits of listening to music as offered by Levinson (1990). Among these were apprehending expression, emotional catharsis, expressive potency, and emotional communion. My findings revealed similar benefits to these, but the most common was musical expression, although not all of the participants experienced it. For the participants, the common benefit of playing music seemed to be in its ability to interact with and intensify the experience of the (natural) environment. This is similar to the results attained in studies that considered listening to music while viewing paintings (Limbert & Polzella, 1998; Stratton & Zalanowski, 1989; see also McKinney, 1990), where emotions (expressed in the paintings) were intensified through listening to music.

Reflections On My Methods and Findings

Data collection.

Data in this study were gathered through both individual interviews and written accounts from participants who have played a musical instrument during a nature-based leisure event. Each approach (interviews and written accounts) had benefits and limitations. Data from interviews tended to be large in size, offering plenty of text to use as verbatim examples. Moreover, understanding interview data was made easier as a result of the many repetitious statements that seemed to emphasize certain aspects the experience. Interviewing also allowed me to note visual cues such as enthusiasm or interest in certain aspects of the experience. Lastly, when potential participants who lived nearby contacted me about the study and became willing to participate, the interview commenced within a few days from the first point of contact. Conversely, participants who lived in other provinces were rather slow (e.g., up to 5 weeks) to write and send data. A possible limitation of interviewing is that more time was required of individuals, although all participants seemed happy to share their stories.

Written accounts, in every case, provided less text than interview accounts, although the data received were equally interesting and valid. It appeared that in writing a description of the experience, participants organized their thoughts by not repeating statements and getting sidetracked to the same extent. This finding was contrary to Van

Manen's (1997) warning that writing such accounts fosters the emergence of unrelated topics. However, in that the written accounts were brief in comparison with the interview accounts, I found myself having to analyze possible meanings from fewer statements. Hence, I had to trust that participants written statements, albeit briefer, deserved equal merit.

Benefits of gaining rapport.

I invested considerable time in developing rapport with the participants who were interviewed and less with those who were to do written accounts. Distance was the limiting factor with respect to the amount of time that I was able to spend with each participant. I often spent over an hour with those who were to be interviewed prior to doing so. This was made possible by choosing an environment that allowed for casual interaction. For instance, a few of the interviews took place in a natural setting of the participants' choice. Prior to the interview, time was spent walking through areas in nature and playing musical instruments a certain moments. As hoped, the act of being in nature with the instruments seemed to break the ice and prepare the two of us for the interview. Moreover, a bond was created between the interviewee and me as we enjoyed moments in nature.

The interview experiences were unique and memorable for me. For instance, my first interview took place outdoors in temperatures that fell well below –8 Celsius. During the interview, we talked and played music beside a fire. The participant then began sharing very personal experiences with me and was clearly happy to do so. His account was quite fascinating and added considerably to the study. My second interview took place under similar circumstances, but occurred in a cave high up (i.e., approximately 10 metres) on an old riverbank. The sun warmed the little cave although the outside temperature was well below freezing. We played our instruments there and utilized the unique sound the cave walls offered us.

Capturing the experience.

In my review of literature, I made reference to some studies (i.e., Hull, Michael, Walker & Roggenbuck, 1996; Hull & Michael, 1995; McIntyre & Roggenbuck, 1998; McIntyre, 1998) in the area of nature-based leisure research that attempted to capture the nature experience at various points; that is, beyond the often-used pre and post hoc measures. The benefit of capturing the experience at various points is that such a method allows the researcher to understand the dynamic properties of the experience. Similarly, the benefit of using a phenomenological approach and an open-ended question for this study was that doing so allowed the relevant aspects and meanings of the experience to be determined. As a result, the participants were relatively free to discuss the lived experience and what it meant to them.

After the initial question, I found that I did not often utilize my probes. This may have been the result of asking participants, just prior to the interview, to recollect the experience as it was lived, including feelings and multiple sensory descriptions. I occasionally would ask participants to elaborate on certain points that they mentioned, but would otherwise just let them talk (or write the account). By doing so, I feel that the original experience was well preserved and not overly biased or directed by me. In all, I was satisfied with the quality of the data collected. I also believe that my own experiences with playing music in nature allowed me to gain a better understanding of what the participants experienced.

However, some participants may have offered a meta-analysis of their experiences. In other words, they may have presented an average of their past experiences as opposed to remaining focussed on just one. For instance, one participant was asked to rewrite the experience because of a lack of focus to a specific event. In a similar vein of reasoning, Tourangeau, Rips, and Rasinski (2000) warn that memories of "what" happened can be confused with "what probably" happened with respect to recollecting a single event (from among others). On the other hand, Tourangeau et al. also believes events are especially memorable when they affect us emotionally (particularly positive events). In light of the fact that my participants recollected events that affected them emotionally and in a positive manner, it is reasonable to believe the attained data was closely related to the actual experience.

Data analysis and presentation.

I found that my proposed data analysis and presentation approach (i.e., adapted from Moustakas, 1994) to be effective, although I diverged from it slightly. What I liked about Moustakas' approach was that for the data analysis, it offered a step-by-step procedure that was beneficial for the creation and organization of themes and meanings. Moreover, the presentation of textural and structural descriptions for each participant, in my opinion, exposed the lived experience quite well. The composite textural-structural description that incorporated all participants into one description of the experience seemed like a good extension of the data analysed prior to it.

There were aspects of Moustakas' (1994) data analysis methods that I altered. First, I found the individual textural-structural descriptions to be a repetitive step adding little to the analysis. Hence, I left out this step in my analysis. The other modification was the use of an analysis method adapted from Giogi (1985); two columns were used during the analysis of data. For example, I placed the verbatim material in one column and recorded the un-repetitive meanings units in the other column. This was repeated in the other steps of the analysis as well. I found that this technique made the data more readily available, thereby making it easier to organize and analyse.

Following the data analysis section, the participants' nature/music experiences were presented. One participant claimed her shared experience as one of her top life experiences. Similarly, others relayed accounts of events that were memorable and meaningful to them in a positive way. It is understandable that people with positive life experiences would process a desire to share them, given the opportunity. Hence, they may have been more willing to participate in this study than others with less meaningful but similar experiences. Moreover, people who have had negative experiences with music in nature may be less motivated to take the time to recall such events and become involved in a study.

Although my participants had personally significant stories to share, it was clear these were not isolated events for them. That is, numerous participants stated they had various positive experiences while playing their instrument in a natural area and some wanted to share more than one account. This seems to suggest that the participants were not just experiencing isolated or unique events uncommon to what many others in all probability experience.

A qualitative study in a field dominated by quantitative literature.

As my committee members pointed out, my review of the literature cited studies based mostly on the post-positivistic tradition of research, and I was performing a qualitative study; hence, I needed to be aware of this fact. Not surprisingly then, I did feel some degree of apprehension when comparing my results to those in the literature.

I did enjoy contrasting the similarities and differences between my data and those of other studies. However, in that there were no identical studies to my own, I compared only certain aspects of my findings to some of the ideas presented in past research. I did find myself trying to place my results within other studies' frameworks (e.g., the structure of emotion) to consider the similarities and differences. However, my actual data collection and results were not affected by these other studies beyond interpreting my results through the lens of a person in my field of study. Moreover, I did my best to bracket my own interpretations during the initial data analysis procedures, while comparisons to the post-positivistic studies occurred thereafter.

Practical Implications and Future Research

My findings suggest that playing (or singing) a musical instrument enhances the nature-based leisure experience in diverse ways. For instance, playing live music in nature helps to alter a bad mood, directs a focus of attention, and helps people feel connected to and appreciate nature. Individuals, outdoor leaders, and music therapists are among those who could benefit by incorporating music in nature. In what follows, I will discus some practical implications of my study and highlight future research needs.

Playing music focused participant's attention. This is an important step to feeling connected to nature. For instance, when people enter nature, it takes some amount of time to adjust, feel comfortable and relaxed. At this point, people are better able to notice their surroundings and become connected to them. My personal observations of others and myself, led me to estimate this amount of time to take approximately four days. Four days makes this feeling unattainable to most and rare for many others who have time constraints in their weekly schedule. Moreover, towards the end of a person's time in nature (e.g., the last 1/3 of trip), it is not uncommon to begin thinking of home (and the issues of that environment), which seems to remove thoughts from the moment and nature. Hence, nature's experience lies somewhere between arriving and becoming adjusted to the area to the point at which one begins to think about leaving the area—cutting the experience short of what it could be. The value of playing live music at the beginning of a trip is the time it takes to become fully adjust or become connected to nature could be reduced from days to moments. Likewise, at any point during a trip, a person could make the effort to refocus their attention on the moment and natures, leaving more time to feel connected to nature and enjoy the nature experience (not thinking of unrelated topics). Hence, a future study could explore music as a way to offer an enhanced nature experience in the context mentioned above (i.e., quickening or sustaining the enhanced nature experience of connection).

This study only focused on the experience of individuals' who play music in nature, however, it has been established by past research that the act of listening to music (not playing) also affects people. It is reasonable then to wonder if a group may have a similar experience (i.e., to my participants). If so, individuals, outdoor and environmental educators, musical therapists could construct musical experiences for others in nature leading to an enhanced nature experience. As mentioned in an earlier section, I have incorporated flute music into outdoor skills and education courses in the past. My observations led me to believe that music does help listeners to feel connected to nature. A future research direction could consider the experience of listening to someone else playing a musical instrument in a group setting.

There are also potentially negative aspects of incorporating music into nature experiences to consider. For example, loud music (e.g., car stereo's) in campgroups have annoyed nearby campers seeking the nature experience. Likewise, group leaders on more remote trips commonly discourage or disallow the use of recorded music (e.g., walkmans) commonly believed to limit, not enhance, a nature experience. Live music may also interfere with the nature experience. For instance, while leading a group of youth on a canoe trip, I found the music of other campers' to negatively impact on our experience. We were sitting at our campsite on a quiet lake, when around the corner another group of youth loudly singing their "camp song," which included thumping their paddles on their aluminum canoes. The song and noise thundered across the lake, leaving me wishing we had found a more remote campsite and hoping they were not going to camp near us. The type of music that a leader may choose to introduce into a nature experience may also be in a style that displeases someone within their own group too. Hence, to avoid detracting from the nature experience, it is important to carefully consider the context that music is incorporated.

Conclusion

My study considered one nature-based activity; that is, playing music—found to foster positive experiences. Knowledge of such activities is of value if attitudes, or more accurately if emotional connections are to be made with the natural environment for the attainment of pro-environmental behaviours. As previously stated, more pro-environmental behaviours are needed to ease the current rate of human-caused environmental degradation. It is my hope that future studies will expand our knowledge of this and other activities that may foster emotional connections to the natural environment.

This study reinforces past research findings that suggest nature-based leisure activities offer unique opportunities for re-creation and rejuvenation. The insightful components of my study centre on the descriptive presentation of little understood experiences such as feeling a connection with nature, playing music in nature, and the dynamic process of emotions and the nature experience. More specifically, this study offers insight into the nature-based leisure experience and how it changes (or is enhanced) through a focusing of attention on a limited number of objects. Playing music focused attention, which led to feelings of connection with nature—through an interaction of playing music and experiencing the natural surroundings.

In all, I found this study to be rewarding in numerous ways, some, I'm sure, yet unrealized. For instance, it was fascinating to both listen to and analyze the experiences of participants on topics that interest me. Likewise, I was excited to offer people a chance to share their experience, which was in some cases, not shared prior to the interview/written account. Further, an emotion was shared between (most, if not all) the participants and me, which formed as a result of significant life experiences being told, as well as being involved in something larger (i.e., social science research). Hence, I feel obligated to the participants, and to others who may benefit, to share the life experiences contained within this study.

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Appendix A: Interview Itinerary

Date/time ____________________________________

Meeting Place ____________________________________

Interviewee ____________________________________

Interviewer ____________________________________

Briefing the Interviewee-Gaining Rapport

1) Take the time necessary to allow the atmosphere to become relaxed.

2) The parts of the interview process that should be emphasized include: the reasons for recording the interview, the length of the interview, how the study will be put to use, asking if there are any questions, and the reasons why they were chosen for the study.

3) Ask if they have brought their musical instrument or song. Ask them if they would like to play or sing it (establishes mental connection to their nature-based leisure and music experiences). Commencing the Interview

If requested, the type of description sought includes:

(a) A description of the experience as it was lived.

(b) Include feelings, moods, emotions, and cognitive aspects.

(c) Choose a specific event, which is still vivid.

(d) Include multiple sensory descriptions.

Question:

Please tell me about an experience that you have had in which you, or someone you were with, brought and played a musical instrument during a nature outing.

Probes:

☐ What about this experience stands out for you?

☐ How did this experience affect you at the time?

Did you find the music arousing in any way?

Was the music creating feelings of pleasantness in some way?

☐ What were you feeling during the experience?

How were you feeling before, during, and after the music was played?

☐ What were you concentrating on throughout the experience?

How did concentrating on ______ make you feel?

☐ Can you describe any details as experienced by your other senses?

☐ What made you decide to play the music when you did?

Were you trying to attain a particular mood?

☐ Describe the area that you were in.

Was there anything about the place that encouraged you to play the music?

☐ How did the area affect the music?

☐ Approximately how long did the music last?

Did any part of the surroundings appear different after the music stopped?

Did the way you experienced your surroundings change at all?

☐ How did this experience affect the people who were with you?

☐ Overall, what words best describe your feelings before, during, and after playing the music?

- ☐ Is there any part of the experience that you have left out?

Concluding the Interview

Closing remarks may include:

A description of what has been covered.

Offer one last chance to add any thing to what has been said.

Interviewee may be reminded that they are welcome to view the completed study

Reminded of the possibility of another interview in the future.

Should be thanked for their time.

In conclusion, time should be set-aside immediately after the interview to record further impressions of the interview while it is fresh in the researchers mind.

Appendix B: Recruiting Poster

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation

Looking for Participants

Do you:

Spend time in nature or in natural areas?

Play a musical instrument or sing?

Ever play your musical instrument while in a natural area?

If you answered yes to the above questions and if you would you like to participate in a study—please read on and then contact either my advisor or myself.

Details

I am asking people to describe an event (in the last 12 months) when they have taken and played a musical instrument (includes voice--singing) into nature. Accepted participants (18+) are to meet with me for one interview (or write one journal entry) and possible follow-up interviews (or entries). The total time commitment is estimated to be 2 to 4 hours.

Background

An underlying philosophy of outdoor recreation (as well as outdoor environmental education) research is that positive experiences in natural areas foster emotional attachments to nature. Such attachments are considered important for the development of sound environmental practices or behaviours. Hence, by exploring various activities that people participate in during outdoor recreation, insight may be gained into the different ways of fostering positive experiences. Music, in other areas of research, has been found to be a powerful influence on emotions.

NOTE: All participants will receive an information letter and two informed consent letters.

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University of Alberta
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Gordon J. Walker, PhD.
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation
University of Alberta
780-492-0581
gordon.walker@ualberta.ca

Appendix C: Participant Information Letter

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
Ethics Review Committee

Participant Information Letter

Title of Project: Nature Experiences that Incorporate Music.

Investigator: Chad Clifford, MA Student
Affiliation: Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta.
Telephone: 780-450-0871
Email: chc2@ualberta.ca

Advisor: Gordon J. Walker, PhD, Assistant Professor
Affiliation: Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation, University of Alberta.
Telephone: 780-492-0581
Email: gordon.walker@ualberta.ca

Study Purpose: The purpose of this study is to gain insight into the experience of people who incorporate music during nature outings.

Background: An underlying philosophy of outdoor recreation (as well as outdoor environmental education) research is that positive experiences in natural areas foster emotional attachments to nature. Such attachments are considered important for the development of sound environmental practices or behaviours. Hence, by exploring various activities that people participate in during outdoor recreation, insight may be gained into the different ways of fostering positive experiences. Music, in other areas of research, has been found to be a powerful influence on emotions. Therefore, music may also be a powerful influence on the experiences of those who play it during a nature event.

Procedures: You will be interviewed (or asked to write a journal entry) about a time in which you brought and played a musical instrument (or engaged in song) during a nature outing. All interviews will be audio-taped. You may decline to answer any question, at any time, without consequence. You are encouraged to bring your instrument to the interview. Follow-up interviews (or journal entries) may be required. **One copy** of the completed Informed Consent Form needs to be filled out and returned to the researcher (if to be mailed, envelope and postage will be provided). The total time involvement for you will be approximately 2 to 4 hours.

Study Benefits: Possible benefits include: opportunity to share experiences, (b) become involved in nature/music related research, (c) if published--viewing the final outcome of the research.

Study Risks: The potential risks involved with your participation in this study may be the disclosure personal and/or sensitive information, which may make you uncomfortable. Hence, you may refuse to respond to any question. Moreover, if requested, referral to a counselor will be provided.

Confidentiality: To ensure anonymity, personal information will be coded and stored in a locked office or filing cabinet where only the researcher(s) have access. Moreover, names will not be used in any subsequent work or publication. Following publications, all data including audiotapes and transcripts will be destroyed. Normally the data is kept for five years before being destroyed.

Withdrawing: If you withdraw from the study, your information will be removed from the study upon your request. To withdraw from this study, contact either Chad Clifford or Gordon Walker by phone, email or letter (see above contact information).

Additional Contacts: If you would like to speak with someone not involved with this study, please call Dr. Wendy Rodgers, Chair, Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation Ethics Committee, University of Alberta, 780-492-5910.

Sincerely yours,

Chad Clifford, MA Student
Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation
University of Alberta
780-450-0871
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Gordon J. Walker, PhD.
Assistant Professor
Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation
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Appendix D: Participant Informed Consent Form

Faculty of Physical Education and Recreation
Ethics Review Committee

Informed Consent Form

Title of Project: **Nature-Based Leisure Events that Incorporate Music**

Principal Investigator: Chad Clifford, MA Student Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation University of Alberta 780-450-0871 chc2@ualberta.ca	**Advisor:** Gordon J. Walker, PhD. Assistant Professor Faculty of Physical Education & Recreation University of Alberta 780-492-0581 gordon.walker@ualberta.ca

To be completed by the research participant:

Do you understand that you have been asked to be in a research study?	Yes	No
Have you received a copy and read the attached Information Sheet?	Yes	No
Do you understand the benefits and risks involved in taking part in this study?	Yes	No
Have you had an opportunity to ask questions and discuss this study?	Yes	No
Do you understand that you are free to refuse to participate, or withdraw from this study at any time, without consequence, and that your information will be withdrawn at your request?	Yes	No
Has the issue of confidentiality been explained to you? Do you understand who will have access to the information?	Yes	No

I agree to take part in this study.

______________________________ ______________ ______________________________

Signature of Research Participant **Date** **Witness**

______________________________ ______________________________

Printed Name **Printed Name**

I believe that the person signing this form understands what is involved in the study and voluntarily agrees to participate.

______________________________ ______________

Signature of Investigator or Designee Date